

BOWIE THE LOST
ALBUM!



SPRINGSTEEN
GOES NUCLEAR!



M *The Music Magazine* **10**



EXCLUSIVE!

"50 YEARS OF CHAOS!"

LED ZEPPELIN

PAGE, PLANT & JONES ON THE LEGACY OF LED ZEP IV

149
REVIEWS
DAMON ALBARN, DAVID
CROSBY, NICK CAVE
COURTNEY BARNETT
THE BEATLES
& MORE

**BUFFALO
SPRINGFIELD**
BUST-UPS
& BROKEN
ARROWS

**STURGILL
SIMPSON**
NASHVILLE'S
NO. 1 OUTLAW

IDLES
BLOW UP!

CARPENTERS
"WE WERE HIGH EGO AND
LOW SELF-ESTEEM"

**THE WAR ON DRUGS
I DON'T LIVE HERE
ANYMORE**



**"THE MOST GROUNDED WAR ON DRUGS
RECORD AND THE BEST: A CALM SPACE
AMID A WORLD IN COLLAPSE."**

MOJO



ALBUM OF THE MONTH

OUT 29TH OCTOBER.

**THE BRAND NEW ALBUM PRE-ORDER NOW.
LIVE IN LONDON AT THE 02 ARENA APRIL 2022.
TICKETS AVAILABLE NOW**

THEWARONDRUGS.NET



CONTENTS

LONDON ♦ MEMPHIS ♦ PRESTATYN

DECEMBER 2021

Issue 337

“I look back and think, My God, all the great songs we could have written.”

**RICHARD CARPENTER
REFLECTS, P42**

FEATURES

- 30 JORMA KAUKONEN** Jefferson Airplane's guitar star was nursed through fame and addiction by a passion for the blues: "When I do a show, I'm telling the story of my life."
- 36 WORLD PARTY** Batting for Beatle-centric song and eco-prophecy at the end of the '80s, Karl Wallinger was a rising star – until aneurysm, betrayal and bad luck intervened.
- 42 CARPENTERS** "White as Wonderbread", touched with obsession, genius and tragedy: inside the perfect pop group via a rare Richard Carpenter interview and stunning pictures.
- 48 STURGILL SIMPSON** Nashville's #1 dissident and "G-list celebrity" on breaking the rules, kicking down doors and forging his own path: "Once I'm done with something, I move on."
- 52 IDLES** Britain's fieriest band sober up and go darker on their new album, *Crawler*. "If you don't like hearing tales of struggle then you won't like it," they warn.
- 58 BUFFALO SPRINGFIELD** How the Swiss Army band touched the skies and shot themselves in all 10 feet. Buckle up, because "there's going to be crashes," says Stephen Stills.
- 64 THE NO NUKES CONCERTS** It was The Boss's political awakening, but who booed Chaka Khan? Jackson Browne, Steve Van Zandt and more remember the gigs that made the world safer.

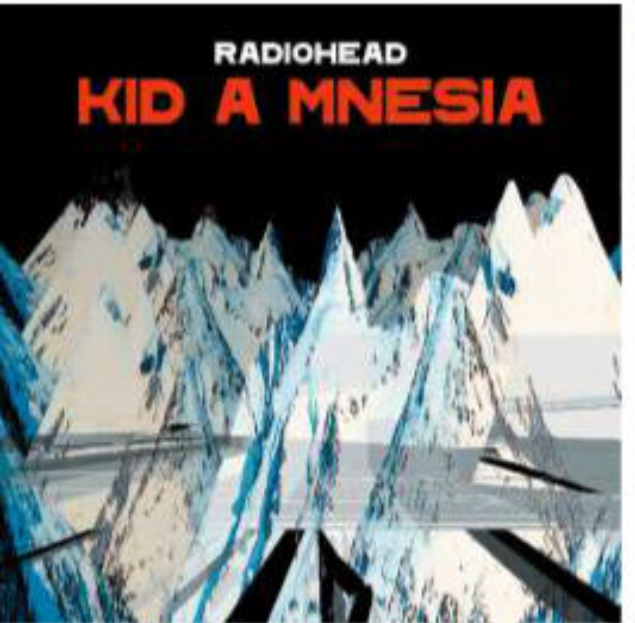
COVER STORY

- 70 LED ZEPPELIN** Jimmy Page, Robert Plant and John Paul Jones celebrate 50 years since *Led Zeppelin IV* shook the canyons of LA and demolished the boundaries of rock: "Not bad for a pack of Limey lemon-squeezers."

Getty



Tell no porkies: Penelope Isles find happy. Albums, p90.



Fountain head: Damon Albarn, Lead Album, p82.



MOJO

REGULARS

- 9 ALL BACK TO MY PLACE** Brian Wilson, Carroll Thompson and Carlos Alomar kick out the jams. But who wants to fight on Saturday night?
- 114 REAL GONE** Michael Chapman, Pee Wee Ellis, Sarah Dash, Alan Lancaster, Richard H. Kirk, and others – we salute you.
- 120 ASK MOJO** What albums will *never* come out?
- 122 HELLO GOODBYE** From Devon to London’s punk sinkholes, burning brightly. It’s The Adverts revisited, with Gaye Black.

WHAT GOES ON!

- 14 DEXYS** *Too-Rye-Ay?* You’ve been listening to it all wrong! Now, four decades on (nearly) Kevin Rowlands is back to put that right. Plus, style tips, new tunes, and... Billy Adams?
- 18 DAVE GAHAN** Here with his new covers set *Imposter*, recorded with regular foils Soulsavers, Depeche’s too-tough-to-die frontman talks self-belief, revealing too much and Martin Gore.
- 20 DAVID BOWIE** Legendary lost LP *Toy* mysteriously appeared online in 2011, but now it’s here for real as part of a new mega-Bowie-box. Earl Slick calls to say what to expect.
- 22 THALIA ZEDEK** The Cult Hero of Live Skull, Come and more is back, and she has pre-Giuliani dirty old NYC, Kurt Cobain and solo-vs-band dilemmas on her mind.
- 24 SUEDE** Drummer Simon Gilbert had a serious case of keeping everything relating to his band. Now he sifts and curates to bring the scrapbook of Suede in their 1991-’93 prime.

MOJO FILTER

- 82 NEW ALBUMS** Top geyser Damon Albarn records in Iceland, plus Courtney Barnett, Curtis Harding, Plant & Krauss and more.
- 96 REISSUES** David Crosby forgets his name again, plus The Beatles, Nick Cave & The Bad Seeds, Radiohead, Replacements and more.
- 110 BOOKS** Bobby Gillespie’s Primal thoughts, plus Dave Grohl, Robby Krieger, Led Zeppelin.
- 112 SCREEN** Free jazz bonanza, plus Beatles in India, Karen Dalton, Oasis at Knebworth.

THIS MONTH'S CONTRIBUTORS INCLUDE...



James McNair
James has written for MOJO since 1996. He left London for the North East in 2015, and in no way misses the myriad cultural happenings and wealth of anchoring friendships he left behind, instead preferring clean air and sand between his toes. He writes about World Party from page 36.



Alysse Gafkjen
Alysse is an American portrait photographer whose work has served as the artwork for countless albums and promotional content for musicians of all genres. She photographed Sturgill Simpson on page 50. You can find more of her work at alyssegafkjen.com or follow her on Instagram @alyssegafkjen.



Michael Jones
Michael spent 10 years editing puzzle magazines, then 10 years writing about films for a TV guide. Music is just about the only other thing he knows, so now he compiles MOJO’s crossword – but won’t even try to claim he’ll ever know as much as the great Fred Dellar. He’s already missed a trick by not using the pseudonym MIJO.

R.E.M.
NEW ADVENTURES IN HI-FI

25TH ANNIVERSARY DELUXE EDITION
2 CD / 1 BLU-RAY

REMASTERED ALBUM FEATURING
“ELECTROLITE,” “BITTERSWEET ME” & “E-BOW THE LETTER” WITH PATTI SMITH
PREVIOUSLY UNRELEASED OUTDOOR PROJECTION A/V FILM & 30-MINUTE EPK
13 B-SIDES & RARITIES, 5 REMASTERED MUSIC VIDEOS
HI-RES & 5.1 SURROUND SOUND AUDIO
A 52-PAGE BOOK WITH RECENTLY UNEARTHED PHOTOS, EXTENSIVE NEW LINER NOTES
INCLUDING INTERVIEWS WITH ALL BAND MEMBERS & MORE...

ALSO ON 2-CD, 180G 2-LP & EXPANDED DIGITAL
AVAILABLE OCTOBER 29

IDLES PRESENT ACTS OF RESISTANCE

15 SONGS / NICK CAVE, MOSES SUMNEY, SOPHIE, THE WATERBOYS, IDLES & MORE



1 NICK CAVE & THE BAD SEEDS THE MERCY SEAT

A Cave classic to start; his frenzied 1988 meditation on awaiting execution. Nick Launay, producer of both Cave and Idles, sees strong similarities: "There's absolutely no fucking around at all," he tells us this month. "It's almost like they're taking what most people would take an hour to do and doing it in three minutes. But those three minutes are as intense as fuck."

Written by Cave/Harvey. Published by Nick Cave Productions, Mute Song Ltd.



2 BUSH TETRAS TOO MANY CREEPS

Foundational punk-funk, now, with the first single by New York legends Bush Tetras. Too Many Creeps came out on 7-inch in 1980, and has been dynamically influential ever since; those vocals, at once louche and narky, and the sprung rhythms, were a key influence on 21st century torchbearers LCD Soundsystem.

Published by Bushtetrassongs (ASCAP) adm. Wharf Cat Records ©&©2021. From the digital compilation and 3XLP/2CD boxset *Rhythm And Paranoia: The Best Of Bush Tetras* (Wharf Cat Records); www.wharfcatreports.com/



3 IDLES THE BEACHLAND BALLROOM

A taster from the forthcoming Idles album makes explicit *Crawler's* changes in sound and approach – not least Joe Talbot's soulful new vocal range. A song about growing in popularity, and stretching out in the process, the real Beachland Ballroom is a venue in Cleveland, Ohio that Idles played in 2019.

Written by Joseph Talbot / Mark Bowen / Lee Kiernan / Adam Devonshire / Jonathan Beavis. Published by Kobalt Publishing. ©&©Partisan Records 2021. From *Crawler* (Partisan Records).



4 THE FLAMINGOS I ONLY HAVE EYES FOR YOU

Idles have described The Beachland Ballroom as "waltz Motown" but, as this segue makes explicit, its beat is closer to classic street corner doo-wop. Chicago quintet The Flamingos formed as early as 1953, but hit big in 1959 with this cover of the Warren/Dubin chestnut. More spooked than you may remember, there's an uncanny space and echo that lift it above the sentimental.

Written by Harry Warren and Al Dubin. Remick Music. First released: 1959



9 THE WATERBOYS FISHERMAN'S BLUES (LIVE IN TORONTO '89)

An always-rousing folk rock anthem here in a live setting from Mike Scott and his Waterboys in 1989: the accelerated finale, summoned by fiddler Steve Wickham at 3:45, is extraordinary. A highlight of their forthcoming *Magnificent Seven* six-disc box, tracing their journey from 1988's *Fisherman's Blues* album to 1990's *Room To Roam*.

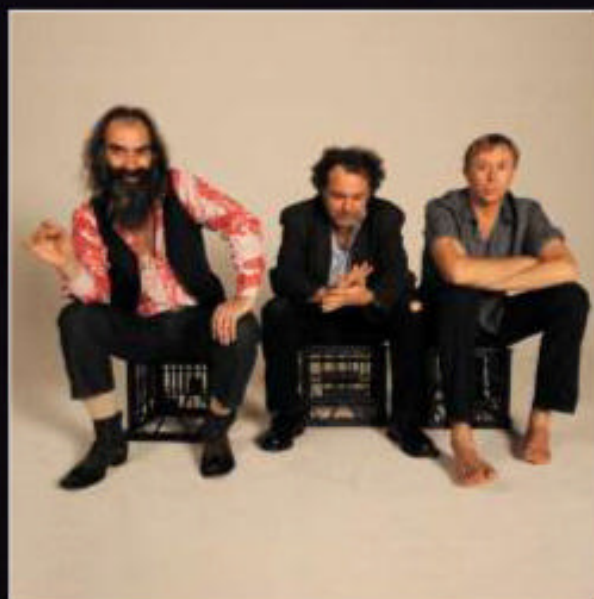
Written by Mike Scott/Steve Wickham. Recorded at the Masonic Hall Toronto 11/10/1989. Produced by Mike Scott. Published by Warner Chappell/Blue Mountain Music. ©2021 Chrysalis Records Limited.



10 RICHARD DAWSON THE BAMBURGH BEAST

An instrumental like a rough cross between Beefheart and late John Fahey from Dawson's 2011 second album, *The Magic Bridge*. Its title derives from a 7th century piece of gold jewellery, discovered not far from Dawson's stamping ground in Northumbria. His latest prog-folk odyssey, *Henki*, made with Finnish avant-metallars Circle, is praised on page 87.

Written by Richard Dawson. Published by Domino Publishing Company Ltd ©2012 and ©2015 Domino Recording Co Ltd. From *The Magic Bridge* (Weird World); www.weirdworldrecordco.com/



11 DIRTY THREE 1000 MILES

Ultra Mono, Idles' 2020 LP, featured a broad supporting cast including Jesus Lizard frontman David Yow, Jehnny Beth of Savages and jazz pianist Jamie Cullum. Also in the mix (on backing vocals), was Warren Ellis, longtime Nick Cave right-hand man and fiddling frontman of Australian instrumentalists Dirty Three. The typically rhapsodic 1000 Miles opened their third album, *Horse Stories*.

Written by White/Turner/Ellis. Published by Copyright Control. ©&©Dirty Three & 1997. From *Horse Stories* (Bella Union Records).

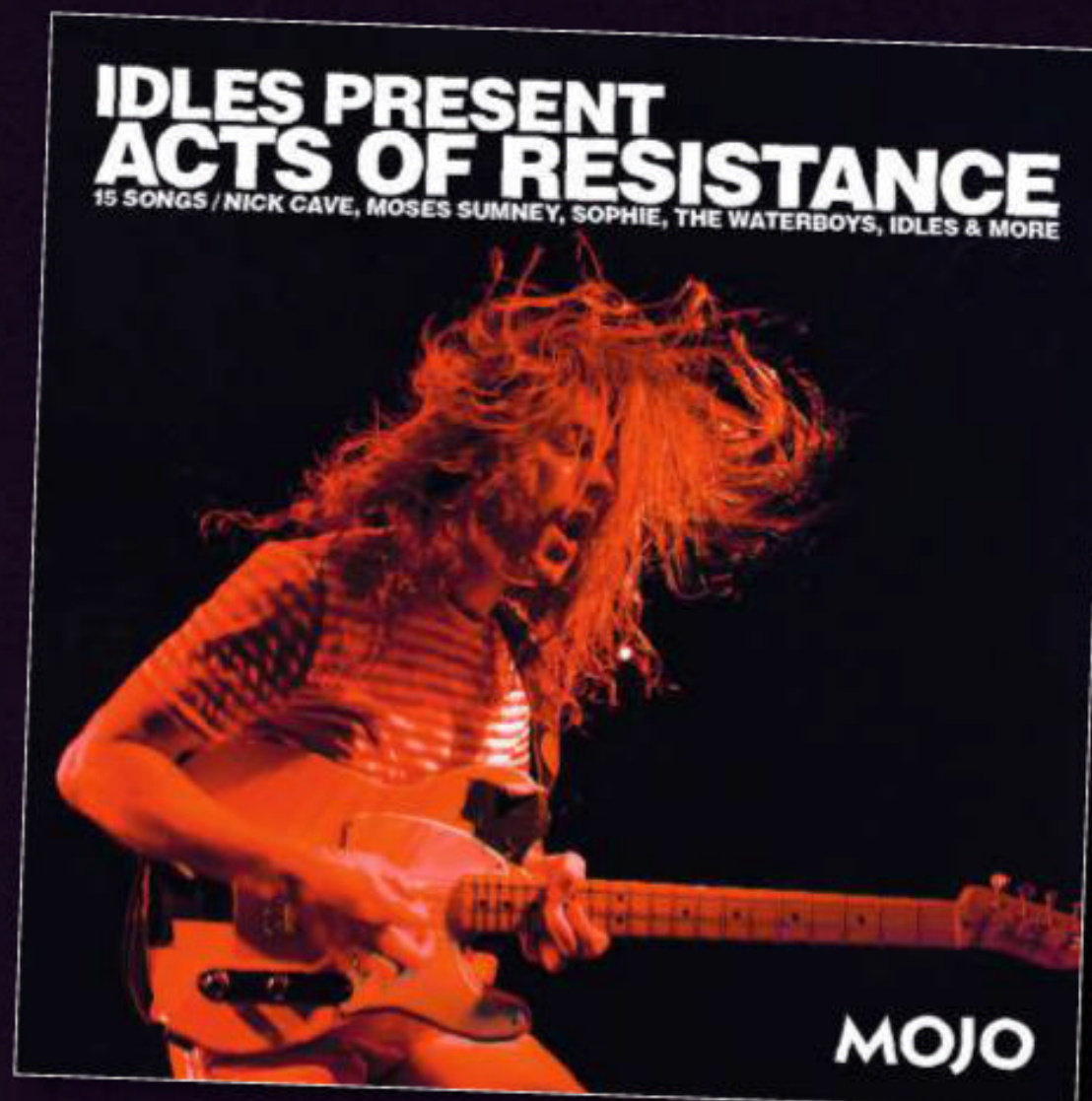


12 ROSA YEMEN HERPES SIMPLEX

Scholars of post-punk and no-wave may have encountered iconoclastic French artist Lizzy Mercier Descloux, and the five albums she recorded between 1979 and 1988. Before those, she was half of Rosa Ymen with Didier Esteban, recording one 1978 EP in New York for the Ze label. A friendship with Patti Smith maps out the territory, but Descloux is very much her own, startling voice.

Written by Mercier Descloux, Esteban. Published by Ze Records music publishing. ©&©1978 ZE Records. From *Press COLR* by Lizzy Mercier Descloux; www.zerecords.com

THIS MONTH, WE'VE HANDED OWNERSHIP OF THE MOJO CD over to our friends in Idles. For the past few years, the Bristol quintet have earned a reputation as one of the most exciting punk bands in Britain, but their ambitious and enquiring music has always stretched further than hardcore genre confines – never more so than on their imminent fourth album, *Crawler*. Collected here, as Mark Bowen and Joe Talbot from Idles explain, “are some songs and artists amongst many that influenced the writing and recording process for *Crawler*. From the deep dark ‘60s pop of The Flamingos and The Rivingtons, to exploring violent sound in newer ways (Sophie and Suuns). Songs that taught us new elements we brought to our sound, in our vocal performances (Moses Sumney and Nick Cave) and melodies (The Dirty Three and The Waterboys). Sounds that are ever present in Idles’ songwriting (The Bush Tetras and Richard Dawson). They’re all dark, they’re all warm, and they all loom large over *Crawler*.”



5 MOSES SUMNEY DOOMED

Idles’ Talbot and Bowen talk in our intro about learning from the vocal performances of Moses Sumney, and there’s certainly plenty to admire on this showstopper from his 2017 debut, *Aromanticism*. Over minimalist synth hum, Sumney sings practically a cappella: technically and emotionally exposed but still flourishing.

Written by Moses Sumney and Matt Otto. ©&©2017 Jagjaguwar. Courtesy of Jagjaguwar. Published by Sumney Publishing (SESAC) and Matthew K. Otto’s designee.



6 SEX SWING KARNAK

“There’s a PiL-ish peppiness to Karnak, suggestive of a sassier future,” wrote MOJO of the Londoners’ 2016 debut. Idles evidently agreed, Mark Bowen remixing them last year. “They combine harsh, caustic, anxiety-inducing sounds with some sick head-bopping grooves,” he said. “You’re screaming in horror but tapping your feet.”

Written by Bell, Cedar, Chandler, Stoll & Webster. ©2016 Sex Swing. From *Sex Swing* (The Quietus Phonographic Corporation). thequietus.com



7 AU PAIRS IT'S OBVIOUS

While Bush Tetras were rewiring NYC punk, the Au Pairs were doing similar in Birmingham via their taut, danceable brand of female-facing post-punk that coalesced on their 1981 debut album, *Playing With A Different Sex*. Here’s the LP’s closing declaration of intent: “You’re equal but different/It’s obvious.”

Written by Pete Hammond, Jane Munro, Lesley Woods, Paul Foad. Copyright Control. ©1980 Au Pairs. Under exclusive licence to Sanctuary Records Group Ltd., a BMG company. Licensed courtesy of BMG Rights Management (UK) Ltd



8 THE RIVINGTONS DEEP WATER

If I Only Have Eyes For You is instantly familiar, Idles’ second doo-wop pick is a much deeper cut. The California-based Rivingtons had just two – notably 1962’s Papa-Oom-Mow-Mow. Deep Water is that single’s B-side, a spectacular deep soul burner in striking contrast to its A-side’s novelty japes. Listen out for frontman Carl White’s testifying; close in intensity to the emotional gymnastics of Otis Redding.

Written by Frazier, White, Wilson Jr, Harris. Beechwood Corp First released: 1962



13 SUUNS 2020

The pinched and whispered vocals might recall Clinic’s Ade Blackburn, but actually belong to Ben Shemie, frontman of Montreal’s Suuns. All ominous wobble and power-packed throb, 2020 dates from 2013, and their second LP, *Images Du Futur*. A song that teeters on the edge of something massive – as if a massive dancefloor drop is about to come, but never, cunningly, quite arrives.

Written by Ben Shemie, Joseph Yarmush, Max Henry, Liam O’Neill. ©&©2013 Secretly Canadian. Courtesy of Secretly Canadian. Published by Third Side Music (SOCAN).



14 SOPHIE PONYBOY

Before her tragic death earlier this year, the British producer Sophie slipped between avant-garde electronica and a hyper-saturated, ultra-modern pop (she worked with Charli XCX, Let’s Eat Grandma, even Madonna). Ponyboy, from 2018 LP *Oil Of Every Pearl’s Un-Insides*, is a bold hybrid of warped R&B, industrial clank and bubblegum – though keen listeners might still spot kinship with the stomp of Kraftwerk’s Boom Boom Tschak.

Written by Sophie. Courtesy of Transgressive Records 2017.



15 JAMES HOLDEN THE INHERITORS

Electronic textures are threaded through Idles’ new album *Crawler*, pointing up the intensity and power of their rock’n’roll. A final example of the music that inspired them is this crackling digi-ritual by James Holden, Border Community label founder, spiritual jazz and Moroccan gnawa investigator, and favourite of Radiohead. This is the title track of his second solo album, from 2013.

Written by James Holden. Published by Warp Publishing. ©&©2013 Border Community Recordings Ltd. From *The Inheritors* (Border Community). www.bordercommunity.com/

“WE’VE DONE THE MOST BRASH BIG ROCK ALBUM VERSION OF OURSELVES AND WE WON’T GO BACK THERE. WE HAVE TO MOVE FORWARD.”
IDLES KICK OFF ON PAGE 52

MARK

The Studio Albums 1996-2007

KNOPFLER



THE STUDIO ALBUMS 1996-2007
THE FIRST FIVE STUDIO ALBUMS REMASTERED
INTO ONE BEAUTIFUL COLLECTION

AVAILABLE AS AN 11 LP AND 6 CD BOX SET

OUT NOW

EMI

UMC



Brian Wilson

THE BEACH BOY

What music are you currently grooving to?

Currently I'm listening to rock'n'roll. I've been wanting to make a rock'n'roll album for years and years. I have some ideas, so hopefully I'll be able to do that one next. My favourite rock'n'roll band to listen to are **The Rolling Stones**. They are always my go-to rock'n'roll band. I love them so much.

What, if push comes to shove, is your all-time favourite album?

I'd have to say *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*. Obviously, I love **The Beatles** and we have always had a mutual love and respect for each other. They say that it was birthed from hearing *Pet Sounds*... I don't know... but I just love that album.

What was the first record you ever bought? And where did you buy it?

Rock Around The Clock by **Bill Haley & His Comets**. I was about 12 years old and was blown away. I bought it in Hawthorne where I lived but I can't

remember the name of the place.

Which musician, other than yourself, have you ever wanted to be?

That's a hard question... I'd have to put **Elton John** at the top of that list because of his voice and he is great on piano. I admire him as a person too.

What do you sing in the shower?

Umm, nothing really... God Only Knows might be nice to sing in the shower though.

What is your favourite Saturday night record?

Anything rock'n'roll is a great Saturday night record, all kinds. I can't really pin one down... how about Saturday Night's Alright For Fighting? That's a good one from Elton.

And your Sunday morning record?

I'd have to say ballads, any album that has a ballad, anything more spiritual, and something with harmonies.

Brian Wilson's At My Piano is out on Decca on November 19.

ALL BACK TO MY PLACE

THE STARS REVEAL THE SONIC DELIGHTS GUARANTEED TO GET THEM GOING...

Carroll Thompson

QUEEN OF LOVERS ROCK

What music are you currently grooving to?

Gregory Porter's *Liquid Spirit*. It's a kind of happy, pre-Covid, pre-apocalyptic kind of place. Also, I've been dissecting [her 1981 LP] *Hopelessly In Love* in terms of having to perform it for the first time, so I went back to the stuff from my formative musical days: **Randy Crawford's** *Raw Silk*, **Carole King's** *Tapestry*, *Songs In The Key Of Life* [**Stevie Wonder**] – just like old friends.

What, if push come to shove, is your all-time favourite record?

Ella Fitzgerald's *Lullaby Of Birdland*, the very first song I ever played on my grandfather's radiogram. I remember being completely mesmerised, she just sounded like a bird,

and thinking she looked a lot like my grandmother.

What was the first record you ever bought. And where did you buy it?

I bought *Love Is Overdue* by **Gregory Isaacs**, *My Eyes Adored You* by **Frankie Valli** and **Average White Band's** *Pick Up The Pieces* from a little, dusty bookshop called David's Bookshop in Letchworth. I didn't stop playing them, I sent my family bonkers. I was about 14.

Which musician, other than yourself, have you ever wanted to be?

Maurice White from **Earth, Wind & Fire**. So exceptional as an artist, a songwriter, a producer, a performer, a genius.

What do you sing in the shower?

Three Little Birds – **Bob Marley**. My mantra, and the opening song at my wedding.

What is your favourite Saturday night record?

One of my favourite reggae raving tunes is *Promised Land* by **Dennis Brown** and **Aswad**, the energy and the vibe is just so incredible. I've actually been on the road with Dennis Brown and Aswad doing that live with them. It never fails to get me in a good mood.

And your Sunday morning record?

My three divas – **Sarah Vaughan**, **Billie Holiday** and Ella Fitzgerald. A really nice breakfast, the smell of coffee and music. That's a good Sunday morning.

Carroll Thompson's Hopelessly In Love 40th Anniversary Edition is out now on

Carlos Alomar

BOWIE'S RIGHT GUITAR HAND

What music are you currently grooving to?

Electronica, rap, Brazilian bossa nova, African rhythms... I've always loved all kinds of music. It's in my best interest not to listen to too much for fear that it should appear in what I'm already doing.

What, if push comes to shove, is your all-time favourite album?

Every bar on [1968 **Al Kooper/Mike Bloomfield/Steve Stills** LP] *Super Session* is a lesson. Look at what they can do with a minor pentatonic!

What was the first record you ever bought? And where did you buy it?

I think it was *Are You Experienced* by **Jimi Hendrix**. We had to travel from the outskirts [of New York] to stores like Alexander's, in Manhattan. I'm a minister's son, so I was only able to play songs like *Bringing In The Sheep*. Hendrix played a C7 sharp 9, and it had distortion on it! I wasn't going back to Pentecostal minister guitar-playing. Hell no! Sorry, Lord.

Which musician, other than yourself, have you ever wanted to be?

“Raindrops have notes, the wind is an E flat.”

CARLOS ALOMAR



Jimi Hendrix. But would he survive now? Get the hell out of here! I'd have to go back in time. You know who Hendrix is? **Prince**, in a different body. Music is a time capsule.

What do you sing in the shower?

Dude, I don't, I bathe. Music is constantly going on in my head. The raindrops have notes, the wind howling is an E flat. It's not a curse, it's a tool and you don't turn off tools, you activate 'em.

What is your favourite Saturday night record?

Oh man, soul music! *Baby Love* by **The Supremes**. I take my wife and I shake my ass and become that kid I was at the prom.

And your Sunday morning record?

None. I have such a full life, I maintain a certain amount [of time] for inner peace and meditation. I think about the week and how I'm going to launch into the next one.

Carlos Alomar's appears at Liverpool's David Bowie World Fan Convention in 2022. See bowieconvention.com



Getty

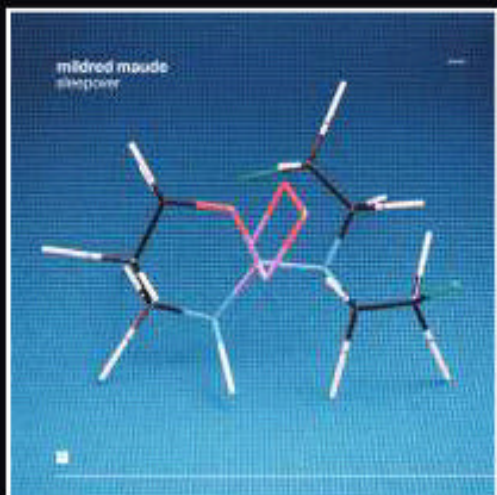
CARGO COLLECTIVE



COME DON'T ASK DON'T TELL EXPANDED EDITION

FIRE RECORDS 2LP / 2CD

Remastered and expanded edition of this seminal record. Includes 'Wrong Sides' disc with b-sides and unreleased tracks, alongside new artwork and liner notes. "Devastating, with slow, burning songs that shudder and wince" NY Times



MILDRED MAUDE SLEEPER

SONIC CATHEDRAL LP / CD

The Cornish trio's improvised noise seems to be teetering on the edge of chaos, but something incredibly beautiful at the same time, like a cross between Sonic Youth and Slowdive.



MARTA DEL GRANDI UNTIL WE FOSSILIZE FIRE RECORDS LP / CD

An award-winning vocalist out in new territory filled with lush strings, electronic ambience and classical structures; Her music crosses borders from West Coast '60s to ambient exotica, from plaintive Lynchian etherealism to dramatic Morricone scores.



EXPLOSIONS IN THE SKY BIG BEND

(AN ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK FOR PUBLIC TELEVISION)

TEMPORARY RESIDENCE LTD 2LP / CD

Explosions In The Sky's first new release in 5 years is a euphoric soundtrack for the public television documentary about Big Bend in Texas, USA.



EMMA RUTH RUNDLE ENGINE OF HELL

SARGENT HOUSE LP / CD

Emma Ruth Rundle's forthcoming Engine of Hell is stark, intimate, and unflinching. The album captures a moment where a masterful songwriter strips away all flourishes and embellishments in order to make every note and word hit with maximum impact.



YOVA NINE LIVES

QUARTERTONE RECORDINGS LP / CD

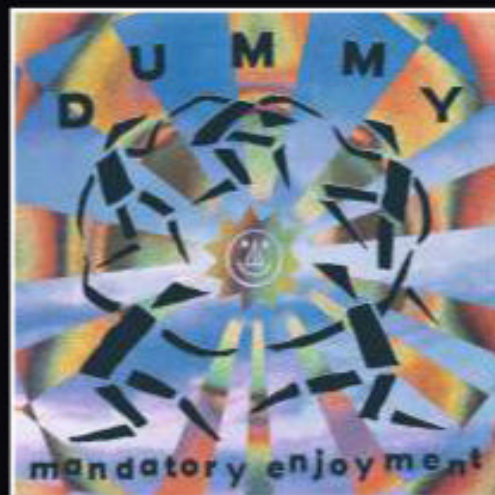
"Champions of sophisticated pop" (Electronic Sound) YOVA duo Jova Radevska and Mark Vernon reunite the original PJ HARVEY rhythm section of Rob Ellis and Ian Olliver with Daniel O'Sullivan, Terry Edwards, and BJ Cole for their debut album.



ASHLEY SHADOW ONLY THE END

FELTE LP / CD

Armed with palpable hope & melancholy, Ashley conceived this material in contemplative solitude with collaborators Bonnie "Prince" Billy, Paul Rigby (Neko Case), Joshua Wells (Black Mountain), Colin Cowan (Elastic Stars) & Ryan Beattie (Himalayan Bear).

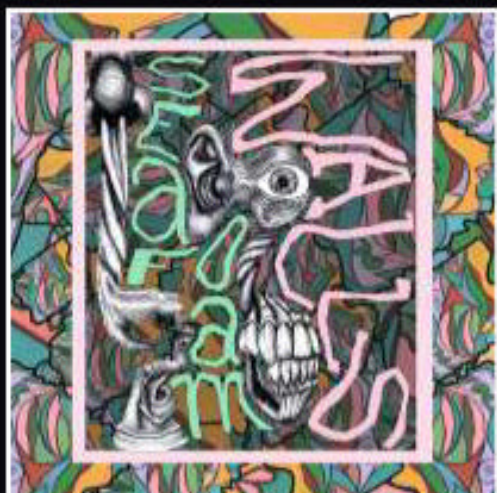


DUMMY

MANDATORY ENJOYMENT

TROUBLE IN MIND LP / CD

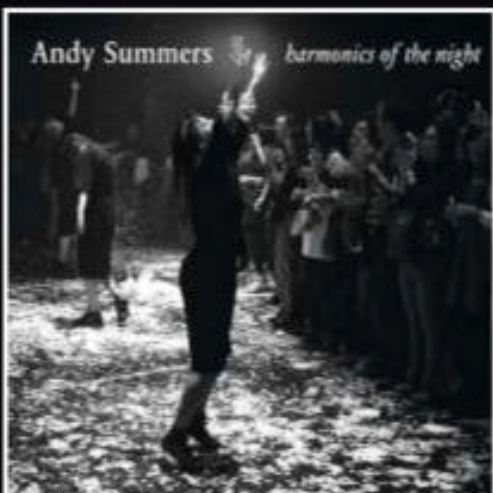
Employing pummeling guitars and celestial ambience within the same breath, Dummy's drone-pop style includes influence from '60s melodicism, '90s UK noise pop, spiritual jazz, Japanese new age, and Italian minimalism.



SEAFOAM WALLS XVI

DAYDREAM LIBRARY LP

Miami's Seafoam Walls have been exploring a unique blend of soul, jazz, dreampop and indie rock since 2016 and are set to release their debut album with Thurston Daydream Library Series label.



ANDY SUMMERS HARMONICS OF THE NIGHT FLICKERING SHADOW CD

'Harmonics of the Night' is the third in what he conceived of as a trilogy of recordings from Andy Summers. Following on from 'Metal Dog' & 'Triboluminescence', it began its life as a guitar improvisation for a museum installation of Andy's own photos.



ENDLESS BOOGIE ADMONITIONS

NO QUARTER 2LP / CD

Endless Boogie emerge from fugue state with a new double LP conceived and recorded between NYC, TX & Stockholm. Major growls, Eklow riffs, Sweeney flavors. Mystery players appear as specters in the mirror.



SIMON BROMIDE FOLLOWING THE MOON

SCRATCHY RECORDS LP / CD

Bromide frontman ejects himself from own band to create alt. americana homage laced with the bittersweetness of Love and Nick Drake - includes guest appearance from Terry Edwards.



LUNAR VACATION INSIDE EVERY FIG IS A DEAD WASP KEELED SCALES LP / CD

The debut album from Atlanta indie-pop band Lunar Vacation is "a unique sonic universe that is both welcoming and intriguing," and "a vibrant display of colourful melodic bliss.



DEERHOOF ACTUALLY, YOU CAN

JOYFUL NOISE RECORDINGS LP / CD

For their eighteenth studio album, Deerhoof has used their agility, wit, and outlandishness to create a new shared language of revolution — all powered by lyrical labyrinths, musical dynamism, and thrashing melodies.



WYE OAK CUT ALL THE WIRES

MERGE RECORDS LP / CD

"Moody, achy, beautifully blustery rock songs about the futile pursuit of normalcy and contentment." — NPR MUSIC.



TOM RODWELL WOOD & WASTE

FIREPLACE LP / CD

Slide guitarist Tom Rodwell unites fleshly rhythms and surreal short stories for nine numbers liberated from tradition, irresistibly performed - a fever dream of psych- calypso, misanthropic gospel and mythic soul.

AN AMALGAMATION OF RECORD SHOPS AND LABELS DEDICATED TO BRINGING YOU NEW MUSIC

IRELAND: DUBLIN - SPINDIZZY / KILKENNY - ROLLER COASTER RECORDS NORTHERN IRELAND: SABLE STARR RECORDS SCOTLAND: DUNDEE - ASSAI / EDINBURGH - ASSAI / GLASGOW - LOVE MUSIC / GLASGOW - MONORAIL / WALES: ABERYSTWYTH - ANDY'S RECORDS / BANGOR - BENDING SOUND / CAMARTHENSHIRE - TANGLED PARROT / CARDIFF - SPILLERS / NEWPORT - DIVERSE / SWANSEA - DERRICKS / SWANSEA - TANGLED PARROT NORTH-WEST: BARROW-IN-FURNESS - TNT RECORDS / LIVERPOOL - 81 RENSHAW LTD / LIVERPOOL - PROBE / MANCHESTER - PICCADILLY RECORDS / PRESTON - ACTION RECORDS NORTH-EAST: BINGLEY - FIVE RISE RECORDS / HARROGATE - P & C MUSIC / HEADINGLEY - VINYL WHISTLE / HUDDERSFIELD - VINYL TAP / LEEDS - CRASH / LEEDS - JUMBO RECORDS / NEWCASTLE - J G WINDOWS / NEWCASTLE - BEATDOWN / NEWCASTLE - BEYOND VINYL / NEWCASTLE - REFLEX / SCARBOROUGH - RECORD REVIVALS / SHEFFIELD - BEAR TREE / SHEFFIELD - RECORD COLLECTOR / SHEFFIELD - SPINNING DISCS / STOCKTON ON TEES - SOUND IT OUT MIDLANDS: BEDFORD - SLIDE RECORDS / CAMBRIDGE - LOST IN VINYL / CAMBRIDGE - RELEVANT / COVENTRY - JUST DROPPED IN / DERBY - REVEAL RECORDS / LEAMINGTON SPA - HEAD / LEAMINGTON SPA - SEISMIC RECORDS / LEIGHTON BUZZARD - BLACK CIRCLE RECORDS / LETCHWORTH - DAVID'S MUSIC / LOUTH - OFF THE BEATEN TRACK / NOTTINGHAM - ROUGH TRADE / OXFORD - TRUCK STORE / STOKE ON TRENT - MUSIC MANIA / STOKE ON TRENT - STRAND RECORDS / WITNEY - RAPTURE SOUTH: BEXHILL ON SEA - MUSIC'S NOT DEAD / BLANDFORD FORUM - REVOLUTION ROCKS / BOURNEMOUTH - VINILO / BRIGHTON - RESIDENT / BURY ST.EDMUNDS - VINYL HUNTER / GODALMING - RECORD CORNER/ HASTINGS - CLOTH AND WAX / LEIGH-ON-SEA - FIVES / LONDON - BANQUET GRAVITY / LONDON - CASBAH / LONDON - FLASHBACK / LONDON - ROUGH TRADE EAST / LONDON - ROUGH TRADE TALBOT RD / LONDON - SISTER RAY / LUTON - VINYL REVELATIONS / NORWICH - VENUS VINYL / ROMSEY - HUNDRED / SOUTHSEA - PIE & VINYL / SOUTHEAST ON SEA - SOUTH RECORDS / ST ALBANS - EMPIRE RECORDS / WATFORD - LP CAFE / WIMBORNE - SQUARE RECORDS / WHITSTABLE - GATEFIELD SOUNDS / WINCHESTER - ELEPHANT RECORDS SOUTH WEST: BRISTOL - RADIO ON / BRISTOL - ROUGH TRADE / CHELTENHAM - BADLANDS / FALMOUTH - JAM / FROME - RAVES FROM THE GRAVE / MARLBOROUGH - SOUND KNOWLEDGE / NEWTON ABBOT - PHOENIX / TOTNES - DRIFT MAILORDER AND INTERNET ONLY STORES: BLEEP.COM / BOOMKAT.COM / JUNORECORDS / MARBLE VINYL RECORDS / NORMANRECORDS.COM / PEBBLERRECORDS.CO.UK / RECORDSTORE.CO.UK

17 HEATHMAN'S ROAD, LONDON SW6 4TJ - CARGORECORDS.CO.UK - INFO@CARGORECORDS.CO.UK

Academic House,
24-28 Oval Road
London NW1 7DT
Tel: 020 7437 9011

Reader queries: mojoreaders@bauermedia.co.uk

Subscriber queries: bauer@subscription.co.uk

General e-mail: mojo@bauermedia.co.uk

Website: mojo4music.com

Editor

John Mulvey

Senior Editor

Danny Eccleston

Art Editor

Mark Wagstaff

Associate Editor

(Production)

Geoff Brown

Associate Editor

(Reviews)

Jenny Bulley

Associate Editor

(News)

Ian Harrison

Deputy Art Editor

Del Gentleman

Picture Editor

Matt Turner

Senior Associate Editor

Andrew Male

Contributing Editors

Phil Alexander,

Keith Cameron,

Sylvie Simmons

Storytelling Executives

James Allen, Celina Lloyd

Thanks for their help with this issue:

Keith Cameron, Del Gentleman, Sarah Hampson, Ian Whent.

Among this month's contributors:

Manish Agarwal, James Allen,

Martin Aston, John Aizlewood,

Mark Blake, Mike Barnes,

Glyn Brown, John Bungey,

David Buckley, Keith Cameron,

Stevie Chick, Andrew Collins,

Andy Cowan, Max Décharné,

Bill De Main, Tom Doyle,

David Fricke, Andy Fyfe,

Pat Gilbert, David Hutcheon,

Jim Irvin, Colin Irwin,

David Katz, Celina Lloyd,

Andrew Male, James McNair,

Bob Mehr, Lucy O'Brien,

Andrew Perry, Clive Prior,

Jon Savage, Victoria Segal,

David Sheppard, Michael Simmons,

Sylvie Simmons, Ben Thompson,

Kieron Tyler, Charles Waring,

Lois Wilson, Stephen Worth.

Among this month's photographers:

Cover: Camera Press/Heilemann

Marjorie Alette, Greg Allen,

Peter Anderson, Barry Berenson,

Alec Byrne, Leslie Campbell,

Jeff Fasano, Alysse Gafkjen,

Martyn Goodacre, Richard Hains,

Wolfgang Heilemann, Jason Laure,

Bob Leafe, Fred W McDarrah,

Andy Phillips, Barry Plummer,

Ebet Roberts, Tom Sheehan,

Kevin Westenberg.

MOJO SUBSCRIPTION HOTLINE

0185 8438884

For subscription or back issue queries contact
CDS Global on Bauer@subscription.co.uk

To access from outside the UK

Dial: +44 (0)185 8438884

Theories, rants, etc.

MOJO welcomes correspondence for publication.

E-mail to: mojoreaders@bauermedia.co.uk

THE BUSINESS OF BEING IN LED ZEPPELIN

was not a job for shirkers. What the various romantics, hedonists, mystics and virtuosi in the band shared was an often ferocious work ethic, albeit one that Jimmy Page felt obliged to enforce from time to time. Remembering the draughty conditions of Headley Grange, where they began their fourth album in January 1971, Page does concede it was “a bit austere”. But “We were there,” he says, “to work.”

As the years pass – and it’s been 50 since *Led Zeppelin IV* first astonished the world – the stories evolve, and different perspectives come to the fore. Building a rock monolith sturdy enough to withstand a half-century takes serious graft, but this month’s new interviews with Messrs Page, Plant and Jones also reveal the joy of being in this most imposing of bands. There’s even a sense that they can have fun with some of their darker myths. “I wasn’t walking around with jackboots and a whip,” *laughs* Page, at one point.

Of course Robert Plant has long been self-effacing about his youth. “I don’t remember a thing,” he claims about his preparation for the imminent documentary on the band’s earliest years, “and had to get my copy of *Hammer Of The Gods* out and read up on it.” Hopefully, if the film-makers ever get around to making a movie about *Led Zeppelin IV*, Plant will find this MOJO an even more invaluable revision tool.



JOHN MULVEY, EDITOR

History was made there

Hard to avoid the clichés with the passing of Charlie Watts. He helped provide the soundtrack to my childhood and adulthood, like he must have done for millions. Played on some of the greatest singles and albums ever recorded. I played Let’s Spend The Night Together on my parent’s radiogram before going off to enjoy the fun of Hampstead Fair. Danced to Jumpin’ Jack Flash when I first met the love of my life. Split my trousers prancing to Brown Sugar. Lazed in a people-packed garage as a party wound down listening to *Sticky Fingers*. I attended the Roundhouse, Earls Court and Wembley Stadium to see him as part of the ‘greatest rock’n’roll band in the world’.

He was always the quiet one at the back. That’s how he always seemed to prefer it. I interviewed him for a newspaper after he’d played a jazz gig with the late piano player Ian Stewart’s band at Questors Theatre in west London. He said to me, over a pint of Fuller’s London Pride, “The pressure is off me, but I meant it to be like that.”

Mick Donovan, via e-mail

After all, what is time?

A mere tyranny.

In 1971 and 1973 I saw The Beach Boys play several concerts at San Francisco’s Winterland Ballroom. The first two shows remain among the best I have ever seen. The ’71 ensemble even included a Wall of Percussion that created the closest thing I had ever heard to Phil Spector’s Wall Of Sound. The sound was awesome, exalting and thrilling, to say the very least. However, as early as that final Winterland show, the unfortunate writing was on the wall, no longer a Wall Of Sound but a Wall Of Sentimentality, as their setlist was including more and more oldies. The band I had revered, as vital and modern as any in rock, was turning into little more than a nostalgia act, the mode favoured by the hammy Mike Love.

Feel Flows [MOJO 334] is a much-deserved and welcome appreciation of the superb, divine music The Beach Boys made, oftentimes in Brian Wilson’s absence, yet often with his oversight, inspiration and blessing. But the compilation’s greatness shouldn’t surprise a soul who was paying attention to the blissful magic conjured by a group ➤

◀ struggling against a stereotyped past to stay relevant and engaged with the present.

Greg Marriner, Walnut Creek, California

Her accent is foreign, but it sounds sweet to me

I was incredibly lucky to see Nanci Griffith [MOJO 336] over 200 times. My aim was always to get front row seats, which I often did. At the end of the show I would give her roses and slink embarrassed back to my seat. This happened a number of times until she actually said to me, “Why don’t you come backstage?” From then on I went to most gigs on the tour.

Given her Texas background, I wanted to go there, particularly to walk down the streets of Austin. I got to meet her sister and brother-in-law, and her father drove me from Dallas to Houston. I also have nice memories of dinner with her after her final show with the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, and getting invited on the tour bus on a trip to the Giant’s Causeway on a rare day off.

Nanci Caroline Griffith was a strong, independent woman who ploughed her own path, which didn’t help her career. Despite selling out show after show, including multiple nights at the Albert Hall and big venues in Dublin, she should have been bigger. Other people had hits with her songs. When I heard the news I was devastated, but she was latterly very frail and had fought off at least two bouts of cancer. I’m feeling very down but will cherish all the special memories. She was always incredibly kind and generous to me. Hopefully she will keep me a place at the bar.

Howard Young, Helensburgh

Well give me time, sir

I dug out *Empire Burlesque* after reading David Fricke’s excellent piece on Dylan’s early ’80s [MOJO 335]. Out of the three albums featured it’s the one I knew least. My copy looked pristine. I have to say it’s a very fine album; sure, there are some songs where it sounds like Dylan is looking at his watch, but the last four – Emotionally Yours, When The Night... , Something’s Burning Baby and, of course, Dark Eyes – are magnificent. Many thanks for the feature and allowing me to dig up a buried treasure. Also many thanks for the Faust piece. Ended up buying *The Faust Tapes* because of this.

Mark McKay, Halifax

You’ve got to do as the doctor says

Stephen Worthy makes a common mistake in his review of Alexis Taylor’s *Silence* [MOJO 335] when he says Taylor developed tinnitus in one ear. Tinnitus is not an ear condition and is actually the result of the brain reacting to ear damage and putting a noise back where it thinks one should be. Quite an important distinction, especially for new sufferers.

Joe Dearie, Rutherglen, Glasgow

This is the universe. Big, isn’t it?

Inspired by Andy Pegg’s letter [MOJO 336], I’m bringing you my Everly Brothers memory. I was an eight-year-old riding my three-wheeler around Plymouth’s Tothill Park. At the end of the football pitches where I usually turned around, in an adjoining field was some kind of fête. There I had my first exhilarating experience of live music. A bespectacled youth singing Jailhouse Rock and a skiffle group (“It takes a worried man, to sing a worried song”) will forever stay in my memory.

But the most vivid one occurred as I was pedalling away. After his announcement for a knobbly knees contest, the master of ceremonies played a record. The eerie, angel voices held me spellbound. “Dream... dream, dream, dream...” It was a sound that entranced and exhilarated me. It was my musical Damascus Road, a road that lead to a life in music journalism. As stated in your editorial, great art endures.

Tony Cummings, via e-mail

One is starved for Technicolor up there

Despite beginning to hedge his critical bets at the close of his review, Jim Irvin states he sees no harm in changing... sorry, *remixing* George Harrison’s *All Things Must Pass* [MOJO 334], hailing it as a means of “future-proofing fine material for ears raised on punchier modern recordings.” Ah, the poor dears, deemed unable to listen but only hear, although I suggest the package is chiefly intended for those of an older disposition anyway. Rewriting musical history to pander to passing contemporary taste only serves to diminish the art itself. In the meantime, colourisation of black and white films, anyone?

Brian Hogg, via e-mail

Can a starving man prove he’s hungry except by eating?

For the last 335 months I have been a keen reader of your wonderful, versatile music monthly. Which adds up to an ample 40,000 pages of mostly interesting, informative and even educational insights into music and its makers.

However, only two of these pages have ever been dedicated to the Fountains Of Wayne. They were active from 1993 to 2013, the best part of MOJO’s lifetime, and produced albums which contained quality enough to have justified a feature article. Their lyrical calibre equals Ray Davies or Squeeze’s Difford and Tilbrook, while their musical ingenuity was of a level of which even Messrs Lennon and McCartney wouldn’t have been ashamed.

I’m looking forward to your reaction and, as soon as this omission is cleared, I will start a new rant about The Monochrome Set.

Theo de Grood, Roggel, Netherlands

Head of Magazine Media
Clare Chamberlain
MD Bauer Media Advertising
Simon Kilby
Head Of Magazine Brands
Anu Short
Brand Director Joel Stephan
Sales Operations Co-ordinator
Tallys Andres
Regional Advertising Katie Kendall
Classified Sales Executive
Max Garwood
Classified Sales Manager Ben Peck
Inserts Manager Simon Buckenham
Production Manager
Carl Lawrence
Sales Operations Executive,
BMA Finance Helen Mear

President, Bauer Media Publishing
Rob Munro-Hall
EA to President Vicky Meadows
CEO of Bauer Publishing UK
Chris Duncan
Chief Financial Officer, Bauer Magazine Media Lisa Hayden
EA to CEO and CFO Stacey Thomas
Group MD Women’s Mass & Celebrity, Premium and Entertainment
Helen Morris
Publisher, Premium and Entertainment
Lauren Holleyoake
PA to Group MD and Publisher
Elisha Thomas
Commercial Marketing Director
Liz Martin
Managing Editor Linda Steventon
MOJO CD and Honours Creative Director Dave Henderson
Senior Events Producer
Marguerite Peck
Business Analyst
Alison Bennett
Marketing Manager Philippa Turner
Direct Marketing Manager Julie Spires
Direct Marketing Executive
Raheema Rahim
Communications Director Jess Blake

Printing: William Gibbons
MOJO (ISSN 1351-0193; USPS 17424) is published 12 times a year by H Bauer Publishing Ltd, Media House, Peterborough Business Park, Lynch Wood, Peterborough PE2 6EA, United Kingdom. H Bauer Publishing is a company registered in England and Wales with company number LP003328, registered address Academic House, 24-28 Oval Road, London NW1 7DT. VAT no 918 561 01.
The US annual subscription price is \$114.98. Airfreight and mailing in the USA by agent named World Container Inc, 150-15, 183rd Street, Jamaica, NY 11413, USA.
Periodicals postage paid at Brooklyn, NY 11256. US Postmaster: Send address changes to MOJO, World Container Inc, 150-15, 183rd Street, Jamaica, NY 11413, USA.
Subscription records are maintained at H Bauer, Subscriptions, CDS Global, Tower House, Sovereign Park, Lathkill Street, Market Harborough, Leicester LE16 9EF, United Kingdom.
Air Business Ltd is acting as our mailing agent. For subscription or back issue queries, please contact CDS Global on Bauer@subscription.co.uk. Phone from the UK on 01858 43 8884. Phone from overseas on +44 (0)1858 43 8884. For enquires on overseas newsstand sales e-mail Paul.Maher@seymour.co.uk
© All material published is copyright of H Bauer Publishing. No part of this magazine may be reproduced without the prior permission of the publisher. MOJO accepts no responsibility for any unsolicited material. For syndication enquiries go to: syndication@bauermedia.co.uk
H Bauer Publishing is authorised and regulated by the FCA (Ref No. 845898) and (Ref No. 710067). To find out more about where to buy MOJO, contact Frontline Ltd, at 1st Floor, Stuart House, St Johns Street, Peterborough PE1 5DD. Tel: 01733 555161.
COMPLAINTS: H Bauer Publishing is a member of the Independent Press Standards Organisation (www.ipso.co.uk) and endeavours to respond to and resolve your concerns quickly. Our Editorial Complaints Policy (including full details of how to contact us about editorial complaints and IPSO’s contact details) can be found at www.bauermediacomplaints.co.uk. Our e-mail address for editorial complaints covered by the Editorial Complaints Policy is complaints@bauermedia.co.uk.



SAVE MONEY ON NEWSSTAND PRICES!

AND GET MOJO DELIVERED FREE TO YOUR DOOR WHEN YOU SUBSCRIBE!



SUBSCRIBE RIGHT NOW!
And you'll get MOJO delivered direct to your door. See page 29 for full details...

MOJO MAKES A GREAT GIFT!!!

SAVE £££ OFF COVER PRICE!



THE COMEBACK SPECIAL

LIVE AT THE ROYAL ALBERT HALL



Released in shops October 29th

2CD MEDIABOOK | TRIPLE VINYL LP | LIMITED EDITION TRIPLE VINYL (CRYSTAL CLEAR)
DVD MEDIABOOK | BLU-RAY MEDIABOOK | LIMITED EDITION ART BOOK BOXSET

THE THE music resonated powerfully throughout the 80's and 90's, then stopped performing for 16 years.

On June 5th 2018 the band returned to play "The Comeback Concert at The Royal Albert Hall."

"When you combine the right songs with the right musicians, and an audience that never forgot, it's like coming home." *Pete Paphides*

This incredible evening is captured forever both in a stunning film by legendary director Tim Pope and on audio

Includes "Uncertain Smile", "The Beat(en) Generation", "Sweet Bird of Truth", "Infected" and "This is The Day".

"Part comeback, part requiem, all extraordinary." *James Hall, The Telegraph*

"Johnson retains a gravel-voiced gravitas, and his band are taut and kinetic on barbed missiles such as 'Armageddon Days (are here again)'... THE THE really shouldn't leave it 16 years until their next tour." *Ian Gittins, The Guardian*

WHAT GOES ON!

THE HOT AND BIZARRE STORIES FROM PLANET MOJO

Rye Here, Rye Now: Helen O'Hara and Kevin Rowland in July 1982; (opposite, from left) Sean Read, Rowland, O'Hara and Big Jimmy Paterson reveal the new Dexys; (bottom) '82 model Runners.





Let's Make This Precious

Too-Rye-Ay As It Should Have Sounded?
Dexys go back to go forward.

WHEN MOJO calls Kevin Rowland in late September he's quarantining in a hotel in Thailand, listening to new mixes of 1982's Number 1 album *Too-Rye-Ay*. He's conferring with mixing engineer Pete Schwier and returned violinist/bandleader Helen O'Hara: the current song they're working on? The transcendence-chasing Let's Make This Precious. Is the new version, as the lyric demands, crying pure and true? "A lot more than it was," says Rowland.

The journey to *Too-Rye-Ay As It Could Have Sounded*, as with most things in Rowland's mercurial career, has not been simple. While the original LP and its classic single Come On Eileen both topped the UK charts in summer 1982, he says he was prevented by his label from mixing it to his satisfaction. Unlike any other album he's made, he's spent the years since haunted by it. "I couldn't fucking listen to it," he says. "The album didn't sound anything like it should've done. I even felt fraudulent promoting it. The irony was, it was by far the most successful thing we've ever done, and that was down to the success of Come On Eileen, which was one of the few [songs] that really worked."

The idea to rectify things hatched two years ago when Rowlands realised its 40th anniversary was looming: a 2020 Tim Burgess Twitter listening party for the album further sealed the deal. Work began with Schwier, using original multitracks where possible. But what exactly was wrong with it?

"You know," says Rowland, "[Original producers] Clive [Langer] and Alan [Winstanley] were great producers, but some people used to mix like that then, just mix everything really hard. We needed dynamics, and some light and shade. They were good songs and good performances, but so much soul and feeling was just buried. Something like Old or Until I Believe In My Soul, when the brass would come in, it just didn't

come in sympathetically. And there was a lot of very high-pitched sounds on it, which made it hard to listen to as an album, you'd wanna kind of turn it down. I would."

Too-Rye-Ay As It Could Have Sounded is no radical rebuilding, he says: some extra kick drums have been added, with vocals or bass accentuated on some tracks, and a new cover provided by the Come On Eileen single sleeve. There'll be no return to the Celtic tinker look of the period, though multi-instrumentalist

Sean Read does go shoeless in new band shots. "He suggested it and I just thought, No shoes, sounds great," says Kevin. "So, that's what Sean did. It reminds me a bit of a Colombian coke dealer, a shoeless one. We weren't going for a *thing*, it was more intuitive, like that'll look good, all intuitively. In 1982, that look made sense. It looks a bit naff now."

The group will play the album live, and Rowland's urge to make music – which he said had abated in recent years – has come back. "We are writing new stuff now, which I'm feeling quite positive about," he says. "There is a concept to it, but I won't say what it is because we've not realised it yet. We'll work on it most of the next few months, then hopefully record it next year."

As well as expressing his delight that trombonist Big Jimmy Paterson remains in the fold, Rowland adds that he's been in touch with ex-guitarist/banjo player Billy Adams. "I've been talking to Billy about a little surprise thing," he says, "which I won't say, for at least one of the live shows anyway. We'll just see how that materialises."

Does this re-writing of the story correct any of the wrong moves made at the time? "I made loads of mistakes and I can't blame everybody else," he says. "But I think it's a big step, man. It's all about the music, at the end of the day that's all you've got left really. I don't know if it represents any more than that... but this honestly is a labour of love. It's a dream for me, righting the wrong."

Ian Harrison

Dexys Too-Rye-Aye As It Could Have Sounded is out in September 2022, when the band tour the UK.

Tom Sheehan, Sandra Vjandi, Getty



"I couldn't fucking listen to it... I even felt fraudulent promoting it."

KEVIN ROWLAND





“The music comes from places we don’t know about.”

MICHAEL ROTHER

just having it as part of my daily life,” he says. “I always enjoy that.”

In August they started to collaborate, and by the year’s end knew “a wonderful album” they would entitle *As Long As The Light* was in process. “It was not initially a plan, but it grew and started making total sense,” says Rother. “It’s an artistic contribution of 50 per cent each. Vittoria had so many sketches ready, I could add my ideas for production, of the structure of the songs and of course add my melodies, the guitars mostly. It was very relaxed, with no time pressure.”

Does working with a romantic partner have a different dynamic than, say, late Neu! drummer Klaus Dinger, a famously truculent paranoiac who boasted of taking 1,000 LSD trips? “Yeah, that is a very different situation working on music with a romantic partner as opposed to my former bandmates in Harmonia and Neu!, and maybe at times even dangerous,” he says. “There are always artistic struggles. Both have a clear idea, a vision of the music, and those tensions, those struggles probably helped.”

He describes the album as eight individual pieces without a theme, all instrumental apart from one sung by Maccabruni and another which contains elements of her manipulated voice. “There are very different characters in the songs, some rather friendly, but also some dark clouds, which I found from Vittoria,” he says. “The combination works very well.”

They finished in summer, and he’s reluctant to credit his changed location with affecting the music. “The music comes from places we don’t know about, from deep inside your system,” he says. “If I had the chance to know where, I think I wouldn’t even want to know. This is the adventure, the magic of not being able to calculate it.”

He and Maccabruni, who earlier this year were heard on Thorsten Drücker’s Joseph Beuys tribute *Aktion Beuys (Music for Theatre No. 7)*, are planning to play the album live. And after that? “I don’t have a clear concept for how to proceed,” says Rother. “I just like walking along the beach collecting shells or looking at the sky... I leave much to chance, and react to how things happen.”

Ian Harrison

FACT SHEET

Title: *As Long As The Light* (“It makes sense with the music.”)

Due: late 2021

Songs: Edgy Smiles; You Look At Me

The Buzz: “There are new elements and I’m happy about them. But I think people will still recognise some of my handwriting. I can’t help that!”
Michael Rother

RE-ENERGISED, NEU!’S MICHAEL ROTHER HEADS SOUTH WITH A NEW PARTNER

“I TOTALLY ENJOY playing live,” says Michael Rother, spry guitar druid of Neu!, Harmonia and, for a while in 1971, Kraftwerk. “I’ve been to Japan, China, Russia, all around Europe and America. That sort of pushed me to present music to the audience and get the feedback immediately, instead of working alone and getting an echo months later. Somehow quite a few years went by doing that, before I returned to recording.”

He’s explaining his slender output since the noughties (last year’s *Dreaming* finished

off recordings begun in the mid-’90s with vocalist Sophie Joiner). Then lockdown and a halt to live activity prompted new creation. In early June 2020, he loaded his car with his black Fender with Humbucker pickups and other audio gear and left his long-time base in Forst, eastern Germany. After two days’ drive he “moved his life” to Pisa and set up his studio in the home of musician Vittoria Maccabruni, his partner of three years. The domestic situation was conducive, he says. “Moving to music-making straight from the coffee or whatever, or the dining table and

ALSO WORKING

... **BLACK COUNTRY, NEW ROAD** have recorded new album *Ants From Up There* at Chale Abbey Studios on the Isle Of Wight... **KENDRICK LAMAR** (right) dropped online hints that the follow-up to 2017’s *DAMN*. is imminent: “I continue to pursue my life’s calling. There’s beauty in completion.” In early September he registered new



songs *Driving Down The Darkness*, *Before The Hangman’s Noose*, *Pale Horse Apocalypse* and more... **NOEL GALLAGHER** is recording the second side of his new **High Flying Birds** LP, having finished side one before the summer. He told the Life Goals football podcast that he keeps a cardboard cut out of Man City manager **Pep Guardiola** “in the studio overseeing the tactical analysis of the

songs”... **Klaxons** leader and **Abba**’s new live band director **JAMES RIGHTON** has recorded a lockdown album on Zoom with **SOULWAX**, who produced the tracks at their Studio DEEWEE in Ghent... Queensland pub punks **THE CHATS** have finished their new LP with producer **Cody McWaters** at The Hunting Ground Studios in Brisbane. After saying they were “writing some shit hot songs”, they declare the



record, “sounds shit hot”... the pre-**Dave Grohl** original formation of Washington hardcore squad **SCREAM** are planning to record new album *DC Special* at Arlington, Virginia’s soon-to-close Inner Ear Recording Studios. “This record celebrates our musical roots,” they say... **BRIAN MAY** (left) told Goldmine magazine that he wants to record an instrumental LP after the next round of **Queen** touring...

& MORALITY



by Orchestral Manoeuvres In The Dark

THE SINGLES

ARCHITECTURE

CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF
ORCHESTRAL MANOEUVRES IN THE DARK'S
CRITICALLY ACCLAIMED ALBUM
ARCHITECTURE AND MORALITY.

The three original singles, Souvenir, Joan of Arc and Maid of Orleans,
on 45rpm coloured vinyl and a limited edition gatefold sleeve.
Featuring unreleased demos, rough mixes and Live at
Drury Lane performances for the first time on vinyl.

ARCHITECTURE AND MORE
UK ARENA TOUR - NOVEMBER 2021
www.aegpresents.co.uk/events/detail/omd-2

OUT OCTOBER 15TH
www.ond.uk.com

UMC

OUT NOW FROM

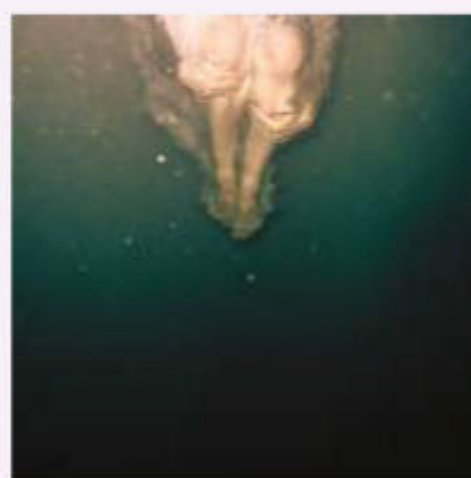
MERGE
RECORDS



Mac McCaughan

*The Sound
of Yourself*

Featuring contributions from
Mary Lattimore, TORRES,
Yo La Tengo, and more



Wye Oak

*Civilian + Cut All The
Wires: 2009-2011*

10th anniversary edition adds
a collection of rare and
unreleased recordings



Superchunk

Here's to Shutting Up

20th anniversary reissue
includes bonus CD with
13 acoustic demos

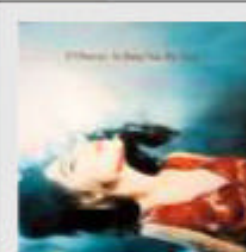
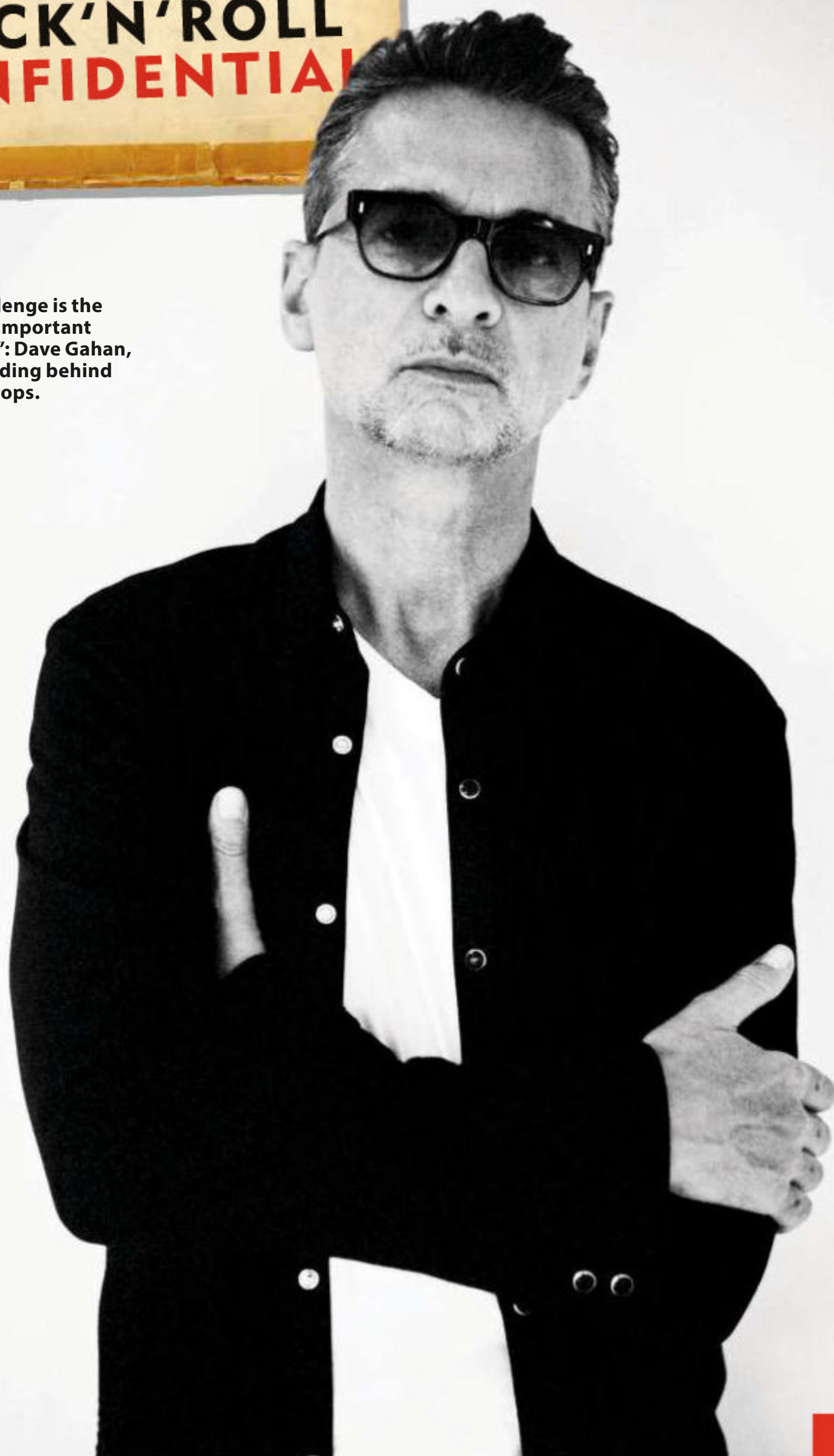


The Clean

*Boodle Boodle Boodle
+ "Tally Ho!" b/w
"Platypus" 7"*

40th anniversary remastered
reissue of the New Zealand
band's first two releases on
Flying Nun Records, housed
in a re-creation of their
original packaging

"Challenge is the most important thing": Dave Gahan, not hiding behind the props.



DAVE'S RAVES Gahan's LP treasures

1 The Rolling
Stones *Exile On
Main St.*

(ROLLING STONES, 1972)
2 P.J. Harvey *To
Bring You My Love*
(ISLAND, 1995)

3 David Bowie *Low*
(RCA VICTOR, 1977)

4 Joy Division
Closer (FACTORY, 1980)

5 Nick Cave And
The Bad Seeds
Ghosteen (GHOSTEEN
LTD., 2019)

started recording *Imposter*, I felt the opposite, like I belonged there.

What do these songs say about you?

I found out more as we went along. For me, all these artists wear a suit of armour. They sing from their soul but they're cloaked in what they are. Neil Young is a good example. His voice brings you right in, but do we know Neil Young? It's more the storytelling, what he is able to do with his voice... with Smile you think of Nat King Cole, but it was written by Charlie Chaplin, and he's the master imposter. [In a song] you can get away with stuff you couldn't in real life.

You grew up with glam, punk and David Bowie. This might be what most people expect you to cover rather than Lilac Wine or A Man Needs A Maid.

Bowie is always at the forefront of my mind, but it didn't feel right at this particular time. I still listen to Bowie all the time, at the moment it's between *Station To Station* and *Low*. I hear so much in those records that I didn't at the time. Maybe I was too young, or maybe I was disappointed, they certainly weren't Rebel Rebel. Today they just sound timeless, which lately I'm tending to look into more, rather than what's current. Whatever popular music is now, I've got no idea, to be honest. Actually, thinking about it, Cracked Actor might have fit on *Imposter*.

After "belonging" in *Imposter*, is it hard to contemplate more with Depeche Mode?

I'd be lying if I didn't say it's a challenge. But at this point in my life, challenge is the most important thing. Martin [Gore, main DM songwriter] and I have had our differences in the studio, but we're still on the same page.

If we haven't got something worth doing, we won't, but I'm still hungry to make good music with people who want that too. Martin gets to swing his hammer more than me in the studio – I'm still absolutely amazed at what he comes up with – but when we're on stage, I get to swing mine. With Soulsavers, there is less pressure, in terms of your past and how many records you've made and sold, though it's actually scarier to me to walk on stage in front of 1500 people than an arena. I can't hide behind the props, if you like, or the hits, of Depeche.

Tell us something that you've never told an interviewer before.

Oh blimey. That's a tough one. The mistake I've made quite often is that I say too much. I've never told an interviewer, I wish I'd said a little bit less. Leave a bit of mystery, for Christ's sake.

Martin Aston

DAVE GAHAN

Depeche Mode's survivor talks time's arrow, covering Neil Young and being an imposter.

DOWN THE transatlantic wire, Dave Gahan's first words are, "It's great to hear an English accent." Yet, having had a New York zip code for over 20 years, the Essex-raised singer is so thoroughly integrated into American life that all but two of the songs on his new covers set *Imposter* were written by Americans. Spanning Bob Dylan to Mark Lanegan and P.J. Harvey to Elmore James, the sumptuous and bluesy *Imposter* is the third album he's made with Anglo-American collective Soulsavers: within, the 59-year-old Gahan's voice is so dark and imposing that it's startling to reflect that he was once the cherubic frontman of synth-pop kids Depeche Mode. "I'm still the youngster in Depeche Mode," he quips.

What determined *Imposter's* song choices?

They're all artists, and extraordinary vocalists,

that I've been very moved by. I believe them. Also, with my upbringing, listening to music was primarily albums, so sequencing was very important. For me, *Imposter* is a concept album, it tells a story. I don't really know what that story is, but I really identify with it.

It's an interesting title...

I've always felt that way, even before I was part of Depeche Mode. Until I started getting my songs on the albums, I've always felt like I was interpreting someone else's ideas. Now I feel more grounded. Also, when I perform, I take on a character – sometimes it takes over more than I'd like it to – and that feels like a kind of imposter. But when we

"Bowie is
always at the
forefront of
my mind."

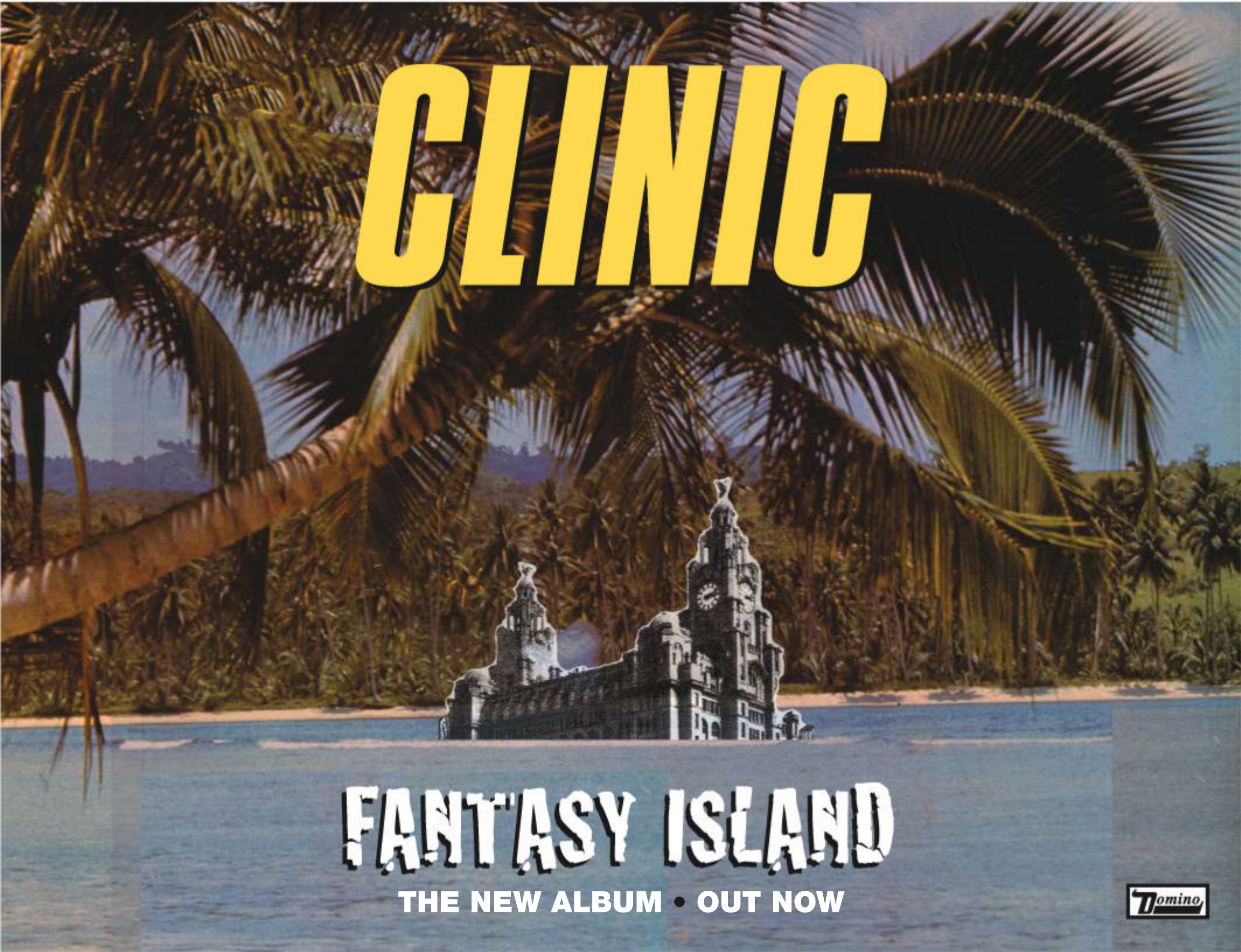
DAVE GAHAN



HAYDEN THORPE

MOONDUST FOR MY DIAMOND

THE NEW ALBUM OUT NOW



CLINIC

FANTASY ISLAND

THE NEW ALBUM • OUT NOW



DAVID BOWIE'S TOY LP IS COMING. GUITARIST EARL SLICK EXPLAINS ALL

MORE THAN two decades after it was recorded – and 10 years since it mysteriously leaked onto the internet – David Bowie's shelved 2001 album *Toy* is finally due for official release. Largely comprising re-recordings of undervalued Bowie songs from his 1964-71 catalogue, its many highlights include sturdy reworkings of 1966's *I Dig Everything* and *The London Boys*, along with atmospheric takes on *Silly Boy Blue* (from '67's *David Bowie*) and *Ziggy Stardust* outtake *Shadow Man*.

Initially, *Toy* will feature as part of the November release of new box set *Brilliant Adventure* (1992-2001), providing a full stop to the period spanning *Black Tie White Noise* and *'hours...'*. Then, on January 7, 2022 (a day before what would have been Bowie's 75th birthday), it will be released as the stand-alone *Toy:Box*, along with alternative and "unplugged and somewhat slightly electric" (ie, acoustic-ish) mixes.

Toy was recorded by the same band that wowed Glastonbury in summer 2000. Guitarist Earl Slick tells MOJO that, ahead of that show, Bowie had already been talking about a project focusing on his overlooked early songs. "He alluded to the fact that he had these older tunes that he was going to redo, but it was kind of vague," says Slick. "Then he pushed a button, and we went in and did it."

Recorded, as producer Mark Plati recalls, "loose" and "fast" over a fortnight at Sear Sound in Manhattan in the wake of the Glastonbury show, Bowie started by letting the band hear his original versions of the selected songs. "We listened to them real quick," Slick stresses. "We didn't really

dig into them too deep because we didn't want to fall into just replicating what was there. We recorded it as a band, live, which is probably why it got done so quick."

Notably, two of the new songs included in the original *Toy* tracklist, *Afraid* and *Uncle Floyd*, are omitted from the new release, since they both appeared in different forms on 2002's *Heathen* (the latter as *Slip Away*). The other newie from the period, *Toy (Your Turn To Drive)*, remains, however, having spun off a jam that came at the end of the recording of *I Dig Everything*.

"We just kept playing," Slick laughs. "He loved that kind of stuff, because he always found some value in it."

Back in 2001, Bowie had originally wanted his then-label Virgin to rush-release *Toy*. Virgin didn't buy into the idea, prompting a split between artist and record company. As to the circumstances surrounding the 2011 leak of the album, there were rumours that Bowie himself had uploaded it to a file-sharing service.

"I was privy to about 10 different rumours," Slick avers. "I don't really know what happened. All I know is that all of a sudden

people were saying, 'Oi, you guys have put out a new record?' I said, 'I don't know what you're talking about.' They said, 'Well, get onto YouTube, and check it out.'"

Ultimately, Slick regards *Toy* – particularly given Mark Plati's punchy new mixes of its tracks – as an entirely new David Bowie long-player. "This is the first record that's come out that isn't just a repackage," he points out. "To me, that's exciting."

Tom Doyle

Brilliant Adventure (1992-2001) is released on Parlophone/ISO Records on November 26.



"It isn't just a repackage."

EARL SLICK



Press to play: Earl Slick (left) points, David Bowie counter-points; (above) Bowie's self-designed artwork for *Toy*.



LAST NIGHT
A RECORD
CHANGED
MY LIFE



Nathaniel Rateliff

The Night Sweats man marvels at Dylan and The Band's *The Basement Tapes* (Columbia, 1975)



I discovered *The Basement Tapes* at 17 when my friend's mom showed me her bootleg. We never got a chance to listen to it, so I started digging, looking

for it. When I was 20, around 1998, I bought a copy in Colorado. I didn't have a TV or a phone then, and we'd sit and play rummy and just listen to it, and I spent a lot of time listening by myself. It made you feel like you were sitting with friends, and it taught me that songs can be a lot of different things. They're not just built on beautiful prose – sometimes they're matter of fact, funny, or just a story – and that you can capture a moment on your 8-track recorder.

I remember one of the first times I had ever flown, from Colorado to Sacramento... I was going through something pretty difficult, and on my way home I listened to *Goin' To Acapulco* over and over, just crying, it hit me so much. *Katie's Been Gone* is another favourite, *Ain't No More Cane*, that was always one that got me. Robbie Robertson's approach to guitar isn't about playing the most notes, it's about melody, and that's important to me. I'd struggled to connect with music of the late '90s and after hearing the album, I started to explore older folk songs and bluegrass. I've never tired of it. During the pandemic, I'd be running a chainsaw or painting a building, or taking long drives, listening on repeat. It still holds up and flows great, and I'm always excited to hear it.

I did a show with Robbie in 2019, and I remember him speaking to a tribal chief from the Iroquois nation. It was amazing to see how humbled he was. Then, we just shot the shit. I tried to give him space – I figured he didn't want me talking to him about my favourite Band songs.

As told to James Allen

The Future is out on Stax on November 5.



BILLY BRAGG

THE MILLION THINGS THAT NEVER HAPPENED



BILLY BRAGG

New album
'THE MILLION THINGS
THAT NEVER HAPPENED'
out October 29th
Limited vinyl editions;
marble, transparent green &
a Rough Trade Shops
exclusive - transparent lime
CD / Black Vinyl / Digital

*'The Bearded Bard
of Dorset achieves
pedal steel redemption.'*
★★★★ MOJO

'...heartfelt and stirring.'
8/10 VIVE LE ROCK

Includes the singles
'I Will Be Your Shield',
'Ten Mysterious Photos
That Can't Be Explained'
and 'Pass It On'



BillyBragg.co.uk



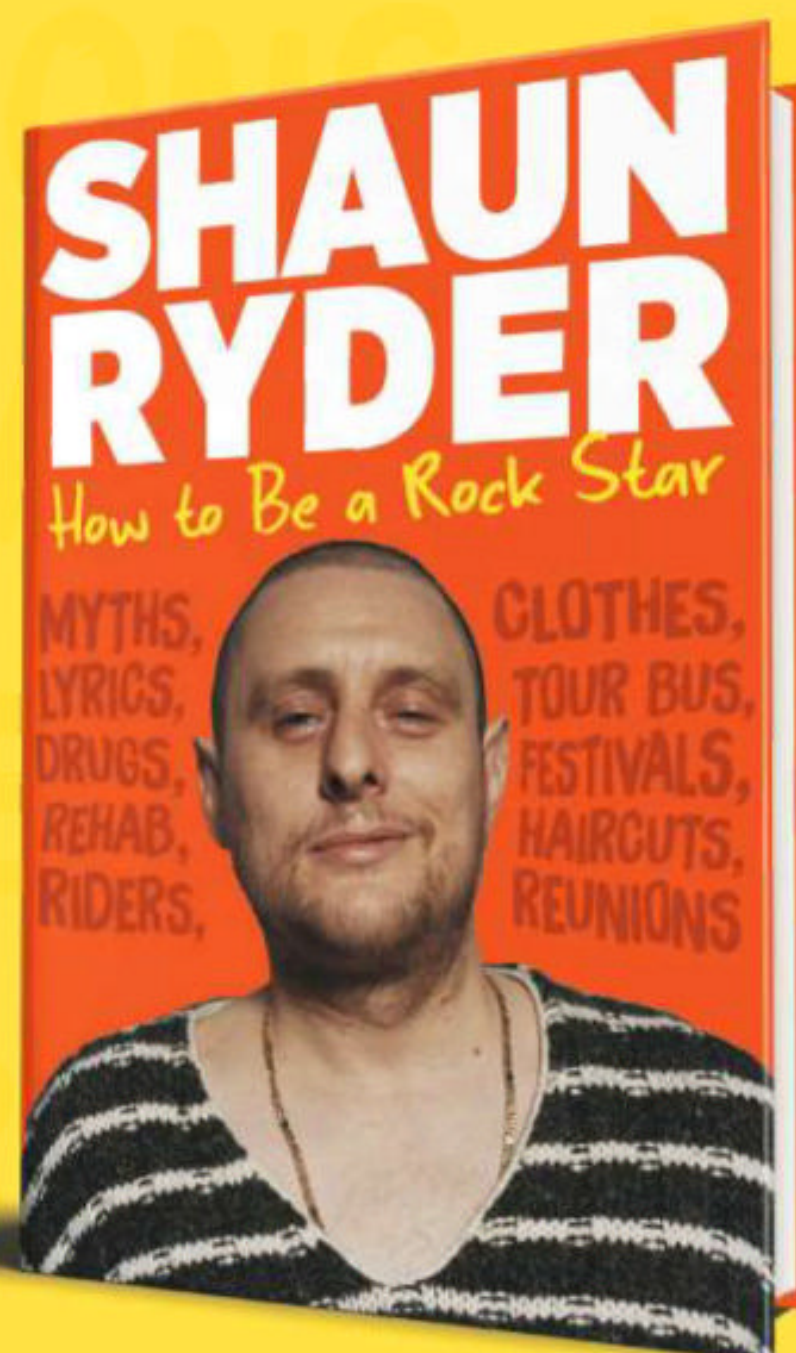
UK TOUR OCT/NOV '21

PREPARE TO HAVE YOUR MELONS TWISTED.

'What would I tell the young Shaun Ryder
if I could go back and give him some
advice on being a rock star? Dude, there is
nothing I could tell him. The young
Shaun Ryder wouldn't listen to anyone.'



Available from
Waterstones



This way up: Come in 1993 (from left) Arthur Johnson, Thalia Zedek, Sean O'Brien, Chris Brokaw; (bottom) Zedek today.

CULT HEROES

VOICE OF COME, LIVE SKULL AND BEYOND, THALIA ZEDEK TURNS UP THE INTENSITY

AT HOME in Boston, MA, Thalia Zedek is preparing to take her guitar to Kingston in upstate New York, halfway between the two cities that have been the backdrop to her career: fronting post-punk touchstone bands like Boston's Uzi, whose single blast of transcendent noise *Sleep Asylum* is still one of Zedek's favourites ("if it came out now it would still sound cool"), New York's Live Skull in the late '80s, and back to Boston with Come in the '90s, before embarking on a long and storied solo path.

Several strands come together in Kingston this September night, when Zedek shares a bill with the reformed Live Skull. Her own set spans 20-year-old solo debut, *Been Here And Gone* (reissued this month by Thrill Jockey) to her newest release, the Thalia Zedek Band's *Perfect Vision*. While her backing band has changed over time – Come's co-founder Chris Brokaw featured on her solo debut; viola player David Michael Curry plays on both records – its defining feature is Zedek's voice: an increasingly gritty, bluetoned baritone located at an anguished mid-point between Patti Smith and Leonard Cohen. Alternately tough and tender and usually written in the first person, Zedek's songs sound like the roared recital of a life well lived.

Joining Live Skull in 1987 saw her move to New York at a peak time of creative freedom. "Before Giuliani and all that," she recalls, wistfully. "I wish I had been less involved with drugs and my own personal demons and

dramas, but that's true of a lot of people in their twenties."

Zedek, whose German and Lithuanian parents came to America from Israel, grew up in the DC area and at high school joined The Shirkers, a punk band who made one single for Limp Records. "A response to Stiff Records in the UK," she smiles. "We actually recorded at Inner Ear Studios, which later became famous for recording Minor Threat and Fugazi. It was a little bit demoralising when I realised I didn't sound the way I wanted to."

Moving to Boston at 18, her next band, Dangerous Birds, found some success, with a track on *Sub Pop 100*, the pre-grunge *Nuggets*. Then came Uzi, with tape loop manipulations by Phil Milstein, whom Zedek still plays with today in tK, an electronic trio with Zedek's partner, conceptual artist Heather Kapplow.

After touring Live Skull's *Dusted*, Zedek returned to Boston in the '90s and formed Come with Codeine's Chris Brokaw. A bedrock of the Boston underground, Come's powerful second album *Don't Ask Don't Tell* is reissued this month (see Reissues p98). Despite the success of debut *Eleven:Eleven*, the follow-up was overlooked. Zedek rolls her eyes. "Just so

ZEDEK MINDWARPS

Thalia's big three

Come *Don't Ask Don't Tell* (MATADOR, 1994)



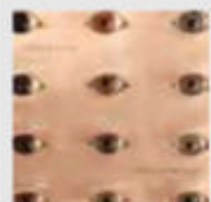
Chris Brokaw quit Codeine to concentrate on Come's second LP. After a series of recording mishaps, missed promotional opportunities and bassist Sean O'Brien quitting, the LP missed its mark. "A little bit of a bummer," Zedek admits. Today, it sounds brilliant, with some of their strongest songs (German Song; Mercury Falls).

Thalia Zedek Band *Fighting Season* (THRILL JOCKEY, 2018)



A trio of great Bostonian guitarists meet on Zedek's seventh solo album: J Mascis, Chris Brokaw and, of course, Zedek herself. "Don't try to rescue me/You are not the one," warns opening track Bend Again, which features all three, her voice soaring and swooping over the glowing, droning guitars.

Thalia Zedek Band *Perfect Vision* (THRILL JOCKEY, 2021)



Zedek's latest album is a powerful, politically charged investigation of a chaotic time in America (Cranes: "The pride of the nation has been erased/ Drowned in waves of shame"). Her delivery ranges from hushed to strident against a backdrop of freeform country blues that plunges and rises around her.

many things went wrong with the recording," she sighs. Then, just as the album was finally finished, Kurt Cobain killed himself. "We had just toured with Nirvana, so that was really upsetting."

By the end of the '90s, Zedek was ready to go solo. "I wanted to be the only songwriter in the band, not to be dependent on other people." Four albums in, she'd come full circle.

"I started to get sick of my solo stuff, I needed the inspiration of a more collaborative thing."

Since 2013 she has collaborated tirelessly: in tK and across four records with E, an experimental trio with fellow Bostonians Jason Sidney and Gavin McCarthy. Amid Come and Live Skull reunions, her own Thalia Zedek Band albums have gone from strength to strength, between the ecstatic din of her guitar and hushed country blues and European folk influences. But always focused, always intense.

Jenny Bulley

"I had my personal demons and dramas."

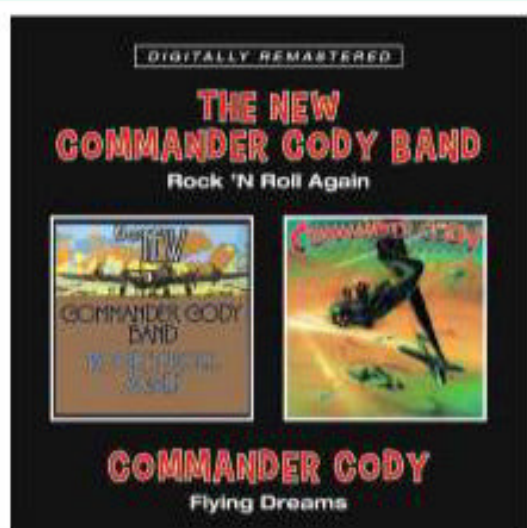
THALIA ZEDEK

Mark Shaw, Getty





MERLE HAGGARD
Same Train, A Different Time
(Merle Haggard sings the great
songs of Jimmie Rodgers)
BGOCD1467

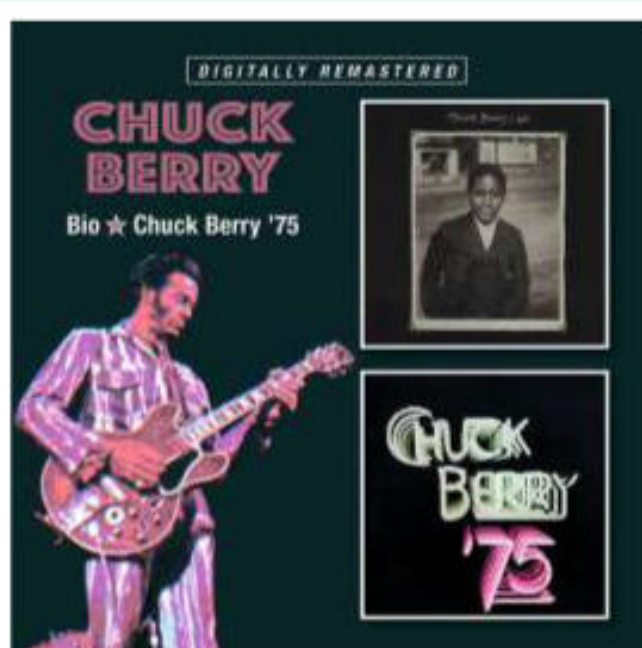


COMMANDER CODY
Rock 'N Roll Again /
Flying Dreams
BGOCD1456

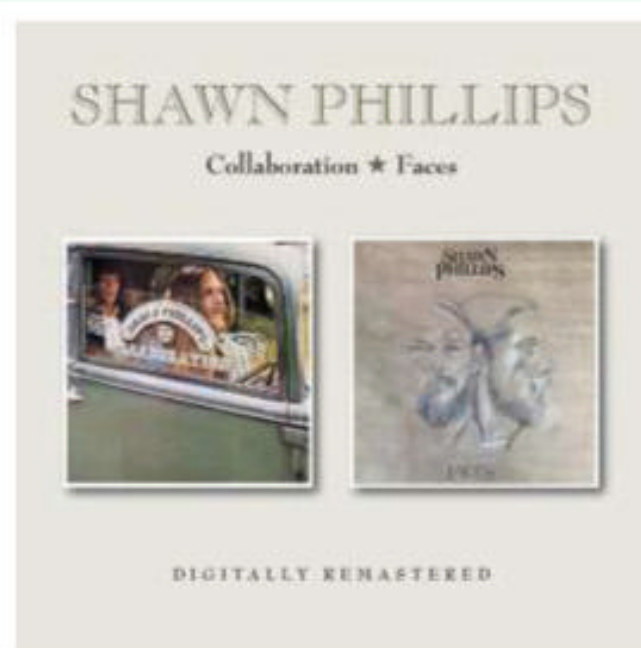
THE BEAT GOES ON...

New releases from BGO Records

For these and more great releases,
visit our website at www.bgo-records.com



CHUCK BERRY
Bio
Chuck Berry '75
BGOCD1459



SHAWN PHILLIPS
Collaboration
Faces
BGOCD1469



THE POINTER SISTERS
The Pointer Sisters /
That's A Plenty
BGOCD1466



CANNED HEAT & JOHN LEE HOOKER
Hooker 'N' Heat
BGOCD694

Buy any 2 CDs from the website, get free shipping (UK only)



All BGO Records new releases are available from Amazon and all good record shops or online at www.bgo-records.com
For a free BGO Records text catalogue listing and order form, please email mike@bgo-records.com or call 01284 724406

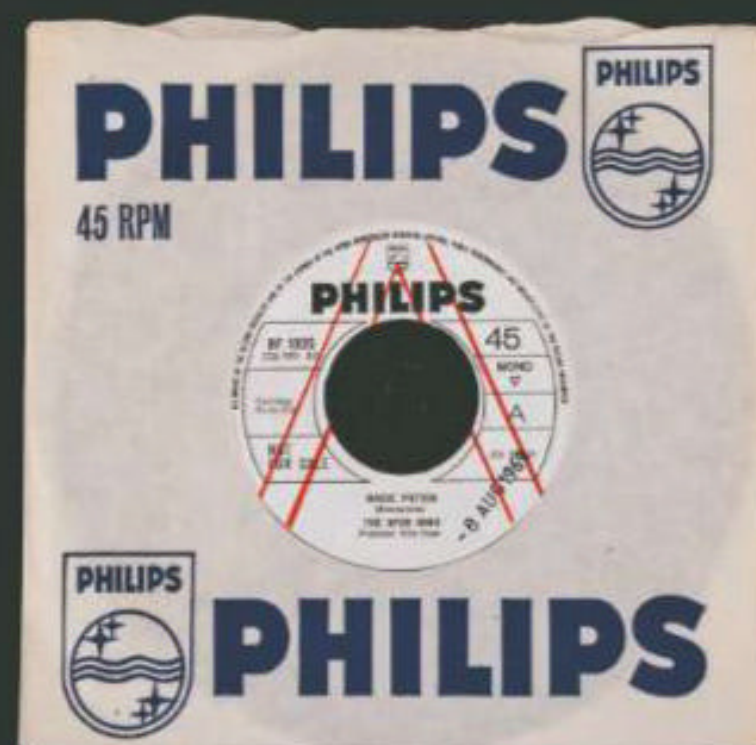
BGO Records, 7 St Andrews Street North, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP33 1TZ • Distributed in the UK by Proper Music



Music and Entertainment Auction 16 November



Featuring one of the finest
collections of Psychedelic
Singles ever to come to
auction, plus rare Beatles and
Progressive Rock Collections,
Music Posters, Instruments,
Memorabilia, Hi-Fi and more



Please contact David Martin
on + 44 (0)1635 580595
music@specialauctionservices.com

Special Auction Services
Plenty Close
Off Hambridge Road
Newbury RG14 5RL



Place your Brett: Anderson leads Suede at the Venue, New Cross, January 4, 1992; (right) early singles.



Trash Aesthetics

Suede 1991-93 get the scrapbook treatment with Simon Gilbert's *So Young*.



WHEN HE worked at the box office of the capital's ULU 30 years ago, Suede drummer Simon Gilbert always kept tickets back from the choicer gigs to sell to touts. "When [Suede] do shows, they're still the same touts as before," he says. "They don't recognise me now, but I know exactly what they look like."

The former toilet cleaner from Stratford-Upon-Avon has a talent for observation and recall. As a young punk, he was thrilled by Ray Stevenson's 1978 scrapbook *The Sex Pistols File*. "That book fascinated me," he says, "and, always in the back of my head, I wanted to do exactly the same if I ever got into a band."

Consequently, his new pictorial documentary *So Young* is a deeply immersive trip back to the Suede world of 1991-93, from toilet circuit origins to smash debut LP *Suede*, ending before the tumult of *Dog Man Star* caused guitarist Bernard Butler to leave. Alongside up-close, unguarded photography, contemporary press material and other memorabilia, Gilbert's diary entries give moment-to-moment thrills galore.

"I've sort of kept everything," Gilbert

explains from his Warwickshire base. "I've never thrown anything away. It's a minefield in the attic, of records, cassettes, photos, negatives, trousers, shirts, literally every fanzine that ever came out [one, *Simply Simon*, was dedicated to him alone]. I used to collect the local version of the CDs and T-shirts, ending back at Heathrow with sacks and sacks of shit. Some of the things in there were ridiculous. Like 25 copies of the *Coming Up* poster, all rolled up, or *Coming Up* condoms, all unused, obviously – the sell-by date was 1999. The rest of the band never kept anything, not even gold discs. They don't have to bother because they've got me collecting everything."

Locked down at home, Gilbert set about scanning, compiling and writing the long-gestating project, though he admits excavations began when he worked on the 2018 Suede film *The Insatiable Ones*. "It was fascinating," he says. "I found so many photos I didn't know I had, all the negatives of photos my friends took. Reading the diaries especially took me right back there – every day it gets busier and busier and you're along in this whirlwind. Even travelling in the back of a van for 19 hours going to Dublin – all the lads together having good fun! You forget a lot, and it's nice to look at the diaries and say, 'That's actually what happened, that's how grim it was', and whatever."

What do his bandmates of the time

think? "They love it," says Gilbert. "Brett [Anderson, vocals] said it took him right back, Matt [Osman, bass] helped me with the text and Bernard was great, letting me use all the photographs that I asked to use, which was really good of him. He hasn't seen it yet. It will be a nice surprise for him."

He stresses that there's no elegiac intent for this early golden period ("I think we did everything how we should have done it really," he says), and that the narrative cuts off because he bought a video camera on December 1, 1993.

"I literally didn't take another photo after that," he says. "The camera never came with me again. The diaries are pretty bleak as well, I sort of stopped doing that as well."

He says the urge to hoard left him when Suede temporarily split up in 2003. In those seven years, "my obsession sort of stopped. Now I've got an obsessive need not to collect anything."

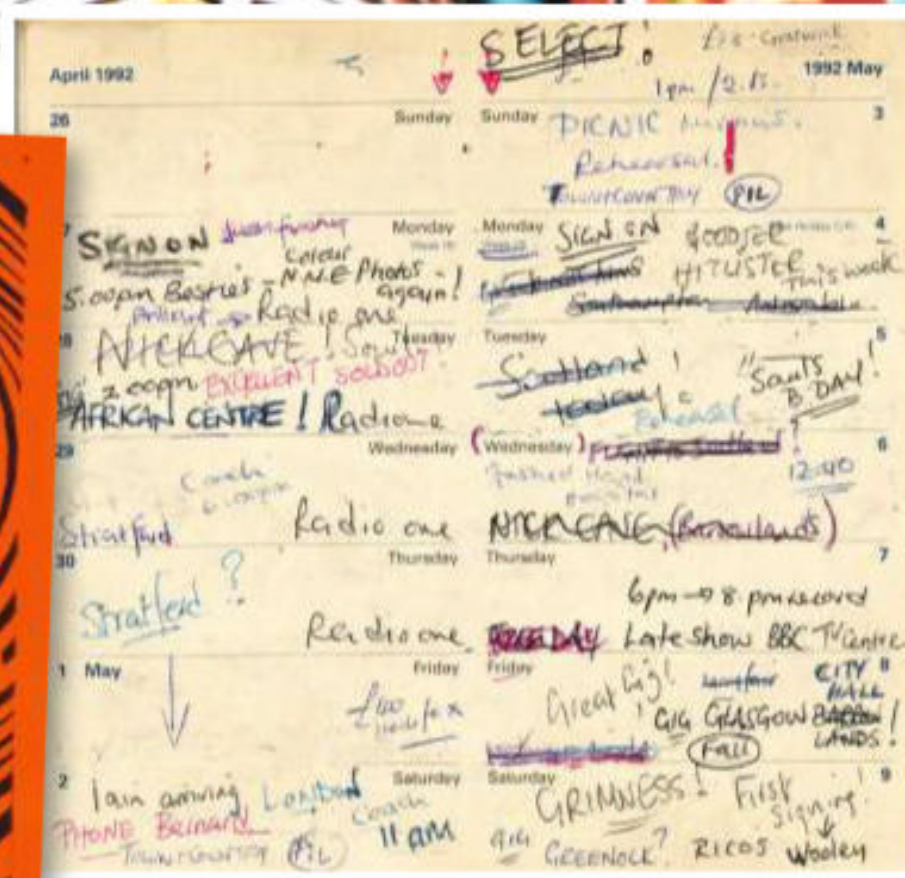
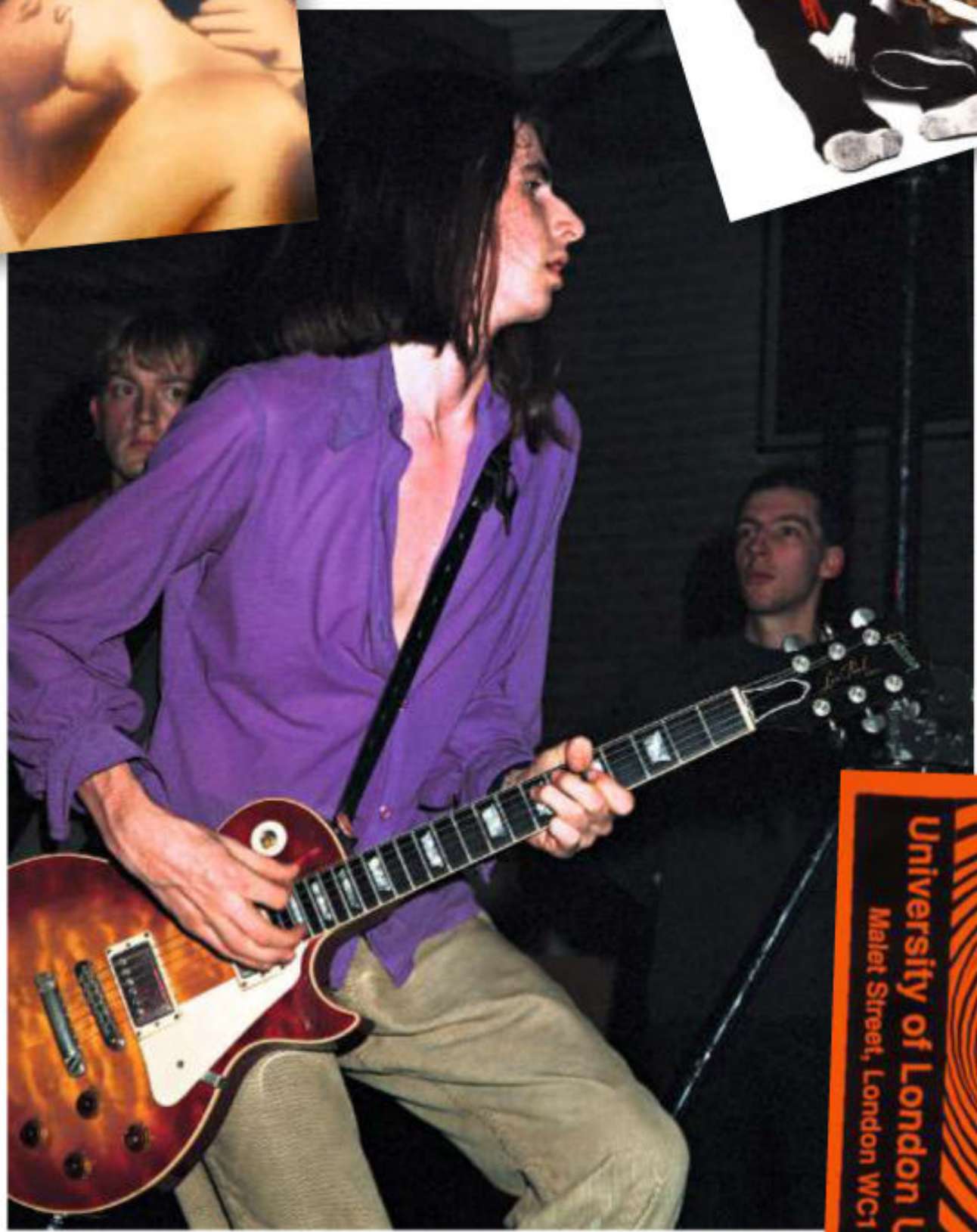
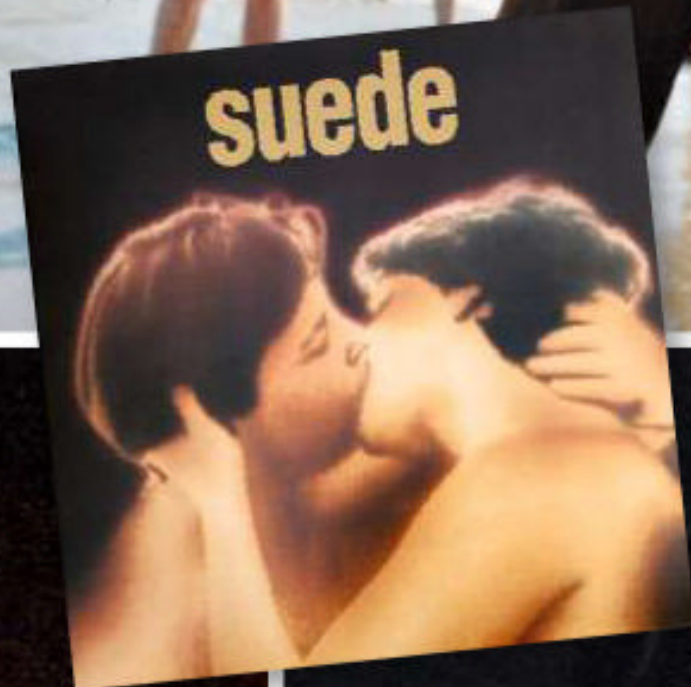
Ian Harrison

So Young is out now. Suede tour the UK in November.



"All the lads together having good fun!"

SIMON GILBERT



Order, hoarder!: (clockwise from left) Gilbert at home in Knightsbridge, mid-'93; Bernard Butler, autumn '92; courted by labels in California, June '92; last gig with guitarist Justine Frischmann, October '91; larking about with US Sgt. Pepper's cut-out, June '92; diaries April '92; UK tour response, autumn '92; (insets) album and 45s sleeves, ULU gig ad, '91.

Buffalo Nichols:
heading straight for
the doom and gloom.

“Race is the
reason blues
exists.”

BUFFALO NICHOLS

BUFFALO NICHOLS BRINGS ANGER BACK TO THE BLUES

FOR THE place that packaged up rock’n’roll’s early years inside the eternal optimism of TV sitcom *Happy Days* and *The Fonz*, Milwaukee has punched well below its musical weight ever since. Arrested Development’s *Speech*, the Violent Femmes and Bob ‘The Chicken Dance’ Kames are about as notable as it gets for Wisconsin’s most populous city.

Add to the list, however, Buffalo Nichols (Carl to his mum), a 30-year-old guitarist and singer fast rising as part of a new vanguard of black musicians reclaiming the blues from middle-aged white guys and injecting it with a modern political and social voice.

“People look at the blues very academically, like it’s something that only lives in the past,” Nichols says from his current home in Austin, Texas. “But it’s important not to abandon this pillar that virtually all modern music stands on.”

Nichols first picked up a guitar when his

older emo sister cast hers aside, something to do instead of watching MTV and sniffing glue while skipping school. “I wanted to be Jimi Hendrix and Johnny Ramone. Jimi was the guitar god you looked up to, and Johnny was the guy you could actually play like.”

Milwaukee’s deprived north side didn’t have much of a music scene, so Nichols started playing in church and, eventually, with any band that needed a guitarist, whether they were reggae, hip-hop, R&B, punk or a still-born Mars Volta tribute band. Working menial side jobs, he eventually scraped together enough money for a ticket to Europe. On a random bus trip from Berlin to Ukraine, Nichols stumbled across a Kiev blues club, sparking an epiphany that led him to return home and start playing his own modern blues.

FACT SHEET

- For fans of Son House, Charley Patton, Eric Bibb.
- Nichols had a previous recording career with folk act Nickel & Rose, but the duo petered out after just two EPs.
- His stage name is a pun on the pre-World War II “Indian head” five cent nickels that had a buffalo on the back of the coin.

KEY TRACKS

- Lost And Lonesome
- Living Hell
- Any Man

Nichols’ spartan, self-titled debut album showcases not just his mesmeric fingerpicking, but also deep political beliefs which, sadly, aren’t so far from the concerns of the original blues players. The track *Any Man* and its lyric, “why wear a hood when a badge is just as good”, crystallises his point that little has changed in more than 100 years.

“Race is the reason the blues exists,” he says, “and I don’t see it changing because America is built on inherent anti-black white

supremacy. People may have been listening more recently, but when it came time for action they were like, ‘I thought listening *was* the work.’”

Which paints Buffalo Nichols as a serious man, with a serious message on a serious album. Surely there’s a lighter side to life too?

“Nah, I’m just angry all the time,” he says with a laugh. “Every artist in music history has serious songs and more fun, dance party stuff. But I’ve always skipped over the dance songs and gone straight to the doom and gloom.”

Andy Fyfe

Buffalo Nichols’ self-titled debut album is released by Fat Possum on October 22.

An SJM Concerts presentation by arrangement with X-Ray

THE CORAL

20TH ANNIVERSARY TOUR

MARCH 2022

Thu 03 SHEFFIELD Leadmill	Fri 11 BRISTOL Marble Factory	Sat 19 GLASGOW Barrowland
Fri 04 BIRMINGHAM O2 Institute	Sat 12 OXFORD O2 Academy	Thu 24 NEWCASTLE Riverside
Sat 05 MANCHESTER Albert Hall	Thu 17 LEEDS Beckett Students' Union	Fri 25 LIVERPOOL The Invisible Wind Factory SOLD OUT
Thu 10 LONDON O2 Forum Kentish Town	Fri 18 NOTTINGHAM The Level	Sat 26 LIVERPOOL The Invisible Wind Factory SOLD OUT

 'THE CORAL' - 20TH ANNIVERSARY REMASTERED EDITION RELEASED FRIDAY 4TH MARCH

GIGSANDTOURS.COM | TICKETMASTER.CO.UK | THECORAL.CO.UK

shed seven

ANOTHER NIGHT, ANOTHER TOWN - THE GREATEST HITS LIVE

with special guests
MARK MORRISS | **NIGEL CLARK** | **CHRIS HELME**
 the bluetones | dodgy | the seahorses
 PERFORMING TOGETHER AS MCH

NOVEMBER 2021

SOLD OUT 25 ABERDEEN MUSIC HALL	TUE 07 CAMBRIDGE CORN EXCHANGE
SOLD OUT 26 GLASGOW BARROWLAND BALLROOM	THU 09 BIRMINGHAM O2 ACADEMY
SOLD OUT 27 GLASGOW BARROWLAND BALLROOM	SOLD OUT 10 NOTTINGHAM ROCK CITY
MON 29 NEWCASTLE O2 ACADEMY	SOLD OUT 11 MANCHESTER ACADEMY
TUE 30 SHEFFIELD O2 ACADEMY	SOLD OUT 13 OXFORD O2 ACADEMY
	TUE 14 BRIGHTON DOME
	SOLD OUT 16 BRISTOL O2 ACADEMY
	FRI 17 LONDON ROUNDHOUSE
	SOLD OUT 18 LONDON ROUNDHOUSE
	MON 20 LEEDS O2 ACADEMY
	TUE 21 LEEDS O2 ACADEMY
	WED 22 MANCHESTER ACADEMY

DECEMBER 2021

WED 01 HULL CITY HALL
SOLD OUT 03 LIVERPOOL O2 ACADEMY
SOLD OUT 04 LEICESTER O2 ACADEMY
MON 06 NORWICH UEA

GIGSANDTOURS.COM | TICKETMASTER.CO.UK | SHEDSEVEN.COM

AN SJM CONCERTS PRESENTATION BY ARRANGEMENT WITH 13 ARTISTS

THE BEST OF

THE DIVINE COMEDY

UK TOUR 2022


April 2022

Mon 25 Birmingham Symphony Hall	Thu 05 Cambridge Corn Exchange
Tue 26 Manchester Bridgewater Hall	Fri 06 Ipswich Regent Theatre
Wed 27 Edinburgh Usher Hall	Sun 08 Oxford New Theatre
Fri 29 Brighton Dome	Mon 09 Southampton Guildhall
Sat 30 York Barbican	Tue 10 Bath Forum
	Thu 12 Cardiff St David's Hall
	Fri 13 Halifax Victoria Theatre
	Sat 14 Newcastle O2 City Hall
	Sun 15 Nottingham Royal Concert Hall

May 2022

Sun 01 Liverpool Philharmonic Hall
Tue 03 London Palladium

GIGSANDTOURS.COM | TICKETMASTER.CO.UK

NEW ALBUM 'CHARMED LIFE - THE BEST OF THE DIVINE COMEDY' OUT FEB 2022

AN SJM CONCERTS, METROPOLIS MUSIC & DF CONCERTS PRESENTATION BY ARRANGEMENT WITH 13 ARTISTS

THE FINAL FULL UK TOUR 2022

In Memory of Dave

the stranglers



PLUS SPECIAL GUESTS

RUTS
DC

RESCHEDULED DATES - ORIGINAL TICKETS REMAIN VALID

JANUARY 2022

Tue 25 LINCOLN Engine Shed	Fri 11 MANCHESTER O2 Apollo
Thu 27 ABERDEEN Music Hall	Sat 12 LEEDS O2 Academy
Fri 28 GLASGOW O2 Academy	Mon 14 PORTSMOUTH Guildhall
SOLD OUT GLASGOW O2 Academy	Tue 15 SOUTHERN Cliffs Pavilion
Mon 31 STOKE-ON-TRENT Victoria Hall	SOLD OUT BRIGHTON Dome
FEBRUARY 2022	Fri 18 NEWCASTLE O2 City Hall*
Tue 01 NORWICH UEA	Sat 19 BIRMINGHAM O2 Academy
SOLD OUT GUILDFORD G Live	SOLD OUT BRISTOL O2 Academy
Fri 04 LONDON O2 Academy Brixton	SOLD OUT READING Hexagon
SOLD OUT LONDON O2 Academy Brixton	Thu 24 SHEFFIELD City Hall
Mon 07 WARRINGTON Parr Hall	Fri 25 LEICESTER De Montfort Hall
Tue 08 NOTTINGHAM Rock City	SOLD OUT CAMBRIDGE Corn Exchange
Thu 10 CARDIFF University Great Hall	

GIGSANDTOURS.COM | TICKETMASTER.CO.UK | thestranglers.co.uk

NEW ALBUM 'DARK MATTERS' OUT NOW

 PRESENTED BY SJM CONCERTS, DE DHP, PVC, ORCHARD & VMS LIVE
 BY ARRANGEMENT WITH X-RAY TOURING AND CRUISING MUSIC


* Please note venue change

HOW **ARUSHI JAIN** FELL IN LOVE WITH MODULAR SYNTHS AND ENTERED THE “BETWEEN-WORLD”

IT'S THE middle of September and Arushi Jain is in her Brooklyn flat, packing for this year's Sustain-Release festival in New York state. She moved to Brooklyn in April from San Francisco, where she had been creating music for the past four years. “New York is a more external city,” she says. “You're always thinking, ‘What am I missing out on?’ San Francisco was...” she pauses to think of the correct expression. “A great place to write, a great place to be introverted.”

The music Jain creates, previously as OSE, and more recently under her own name on her gorgeous 2021 album *Under The Lilac Sky*, is

simultaneously introspective and expansive, blending the Hindustani morning ragas of her Delhi birthplace with the '80s West Coast new age synth modulations of her adopted home and the multi-layered voices of childhood. “I'm not a Western classical musician or an Indian classical musician,” she has said, “I'm the space in between.”

Jain grew up in a huge family, with lots of siblings in the same house “and the chaos of their voices,” she adds. “My cousins all had incredible voices, and my mum studied Indian classical music, so a guru would come over twice a week and teach us different ragas.”

Jain was taught Indian classical music at the Prayag Hindustani Music School and the Ravi Shankar Institute in Delhi, before moving to Stanford University in California to study computer science, an experience that had a profound effect on her creative spirit.

“In my freshman year I tried to get involved in campus music things, but I was singing in Hindi and people were like, ‘What is

that?!’ I didn't know how to sing in English, so I was kind of shut out. Which had a huge emotional and mental impact on me. I felt totally rejected.”

It wasn't until three years later that Jain decided to start writing music, reacquainting herself with Indian classical music but centred around her discovery of modular synthesizers

via friends at CCRMA, The Centre for Computer Research in Music and Acoustics at Stanford.

“The first time I messed around on one, I just fell in love. It's a living breathing system with its own kind of personality. I'm no longer alone. Its voice has helped me

discover *my* voice. Sometimes it frustrates me but sometimes I'm taken aback by how beautiful it can sound.”

When Jain was taught ragas back in Delhi, she was told she had get to know their behaviours and unique characteristics, as if they were a person. It's fair to say that this is also the relationship she has with her synth, their work a collaboration, a coming to terms with what each voice is capable of in its reinterpretation of Indian classical music.

“My biggest hope is that by listening to my music you understand my experience,” she says. “The music I write only came about because I exist in this between-world, because I've had so many different homes. But when I'm writing this music I feel like I'm connected to all of them at once.”

Andrew Male

Arushi Jain's Under The Lilac Sky is out now on Leaving Records.

“It's a living breathing system.”

ARUSHI JAIN LOVES HER SYNTHS

FACT SHEET

- For fans of Alice Coltrane, Suzanne Ciani, Ali Akbar Khan
- Arushi Jain's day job is writing code for websites, so she has been reluctant to engage with more modern electronic composition techniques. “I'm tired of doing that at work, and I don't want to do the same thing when I come home.”
- As a child she toured Austria and India as part of the Mozart Choir of India, a collaboration between the Austrian embassy, the Ravi Shankar Institute and the Vienna Boys Choir.

KEY TRACKS

- Richer Than Blood
- Under The Lilac Sky
- My People Have Deep Roots

Arushi Jain: keeps her modular friend close.

MOJO PLAYLIST



Rock action, funk and space music? It's *all* on.

1 CAT POWER A PAIR OF BROWN EYES
Chan Marshall kicks off another tranche of covers with this unsteadily ethereal Pogues rethink. Very much captures the spirit, if not the sound, of Shane MacGowan.
Find it: *streaming services*

2 J MASCIS DEATH OF A DREAM
Sweetness, guitar grind and self-realisation, from tribute set *Highway Butterfly – The Songs Of Neal Casal*. Within, Steve Earle, Bob Weir and more play for the late guitarist's charity.
Find it: *nealcasalmusicfoundation.org*

3 BITCHIN BAJAS OUTER SPACEWAYS INCORPORATED
New Age Chicagoans expand on their Sun Ra fetish for a whole album of covers – including this electropop trinket: think cosmic ritual re-scored by Wendy Carlos.
Find it: *Bandcamp*

4 GINA BIRCH FEMINIST SONG
The Raincoats' bass/voice's first solo 45! Electronics and Spector-pop pulses with righteous rage: “To hell with powerlessness!”
Find it: *Third Man single*

5 BAXTER DURY D.O.A.
The newbie, made with his son Kosmo, from Dury's new best-of *Mr Maserati 2001-2021*; condemned, bittersweet Albion-rap seeking impossible absolution.
Find it: *streaming services*

6 FULU MIZIKI BIVADA
Congoese collective's head-crunching, dancefloor version of Congotronics, played on what sounds like digitised thumb pianos.
Find it: *YouTube*

7 BACAO RHYTHM & STEEL BAND MY JAMAICAN DUB
Can you cover a dub version? But of course. Grace Jones gets the steel drum treatment, with breaks, brass and bass also a speciality.
Find it: *streaming services*

8 CATHERINE GRAINDORGE ELDORADO
John Parish-produced Belgian composer employs droning harmonium and heavy treatment of her violin and viola to reverberant, ambient-unsettling effect.
Find it: *streaming services*

9 JANE WEAVER SUNSET DREAMS
Weaver's crystalline voice, distanced by FX, takes an analogue bubblebath on this sad-robot broadcast from her *Sunset Dreams* EP.
Find it: *streaming services*

10 RICHARD FEARLESS FUTURE RAVE MEMORY
A companion to *Deep Rave Memory*, this kosmische hour heads deeper into acidic drone until you enter the feedback omphalos.
Find it: *streaming services*

SUBSCRIBE TO MOJO FOR £4.50 A MONTH!

SUBSCRIBE TODAY AND BENEFIT FROM:

★ Enjoy all the regular benefits of your favourite music magazine – including exclusive CDs with every issue - with our special, subscriber-only covers

★ Only £4.50 a month!

★ Free UK Delivery to your door / instant download to your Smartphone or Tablet

PRINT ONLY

£4.50 a month when you pay by recurring payment



DIGITAL ONLY

£2.10 a month when you pay by recurring payment



CALL: 01858 438884
QUOTE: FHAA

VISIT: www.greatmagazines.co.uk/mojo

**MOJO
FOR ONLY
£4.50 A
MONTH**

Terms & Conditions: Subscriptions will start with the next available issue. The minimum term is 12 months. Recurring payments will continue to be taken unless you tell us otherwise. This offer closes on 31/12/2021. This offer cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. Cost from landlines for 01 numbers per minute are (approximate) 2p to 10p. Cost from mobiles per minute (approximate) 10p to 40p. Costs vary depending on the geographical location in the UK. You may get free calls to some numbers as part of your call package – please check with your phone provider. Order lines open 8am-9.30pm (Mon-Fri), 8am-4pm (Sat). UK orders only. Overseas? Phone +44 1858 438828. Calls may be monitored or recorded for training purposes. For full terms and conditions please visit: <http://www.greatmagazines.co.uk/offer-terms-and-conditions>



The Jefferson Airplane's psychedelic stalwart went from blues to rock to smack and back but never lost his sense of humour. Now 80, he's determined to pass on all he has preserved. "It's about telling stories," says **Jorma Kaukonen**.

Interview by **MICHAEL SIMMONS** • Portrait by **JEFF FASANO**

"A M I A HIPPY?" PONDERES JORMA Kaukonen, one-time guitar kingpin of Haight-Ashbury poster children the Jefferson Airplane: along with their Grateful Dead pals, the hippy-est of hippy bands. "The answer's no, I don't think I was."

Kaukonen turned 80 last December and is counterintuitively more loquacious than he was at 30. "I've never been a communal person," he continues. "The Airplane made money, we bought cars, houses. That being said, if there's a freedom of spirit to generic hippy consciousness, then we shared that spirit."

It's nearly 55 years since Kaukonen helped define the San Francisco sound and its psychedelic milieu on 1967's *Surrealistic Pillow*, Jefferson Airplane's stratospheric second album. That record's Top 10 hits – Somebody To Love and White Rabbit – both featured Kaukonen's piercing, snaking lead guitar, additions to the new rock guitar vocabulary in the era of Clapton and Hendrix. Meanwhile, the six eccentric members of the Airplane's classic line-up – singers Grace Slick and Marty Balin; guitarists Kaukonen and Paul Kantner; bassist Jack Casady and drummer Spencer Dryden – embodied the scene's do-your-own-thing ethos. The group were musically free-spirited as well, exemplified by Kaukonen's Embryonic Journey, the bewitching acoustic guitar instrumental on *Surrealistic Pillow* that he had written back in 1962. Group members'

distinctive individuality was a strength, until it became a weakness, and the Airplane's factions splintered.

Born in Washington DC, the son of a State Department employee, Kaukonen had a nomadic youth, glomming onto the guitar and becoming a devotee of the Reverend Gary Davis and the Piedmont style of fingerpicked country blues. He and Jack Casady – a close friend since their teens – would jam in hotel rooms throughout the Airplane's ascendancy, and by 1969 had formed side project Hot Tuna to pursue the music that, Kaukonen says, "set me on fire." Their self-titled 1970 debut album was acoustic blues. With subsequent albums they became hard electric blues-rockers and while the Airplane broke up in 1972, Hot Tuna continued. They perform to this day to a devoted fan-base.

The '80s were challenging for Kaukonen, but the road dog never stopped working in various aggregations. By the early '90s he found peace – literally. He and second wife Vanessa run Fur Peace Ranch

in rural southeastern Ohio, a guitar camp that's also home to the Psydelic Gallery, a converted farm building that exhibits art and artefacts with a '60s focus. He may deny he's a hippy but, 25 years sober, the 80-year-old is an exemplar of the movement's best ideals: an inquisitive open mind, a sense of justice, evolving creativity, irreverent wit.

You were 15 when you first got a guitar?

Yeah. I just wanted to be able to sing songs and the guitar was cool-looking. For me to play the guitar and strum rhythmically and simulate ➤

WE'RE NOT WORTHY

Steve Earle pays tribute to "the maestro".



"It seems I always knew about Jorma. I had an uncle five years older than me, he got me into the Airplane and I listened to Hot Tuna from the beginning. He does that fingerstyle and flat-pick guitar thing better than anybody – same class as Doc Watson. And he's so centred, so reassuring. I call him 'Maestro'."

◀ the rock'n'roll songs of my youth was good enough for me. A neighbourhood guy in DC took me under his wing, showed me chords and how to strum. What really set me on fire was stuff I heard him do – folky, old-timey, ersatz bluegrass. The Carter Family, country stuff like The Louvin Brothers, Rose Maddox and the pop-country of the era. As rock'n'roll exploded, there'd be Buddy Holly.

When did you get into fingerpicking?

When I was 20 and went to Antioch [College in Ohio] and I met Ian Buchanan. Ian was one of the legendary characters from the Greenwich Village scene and took me under his wing. I'd never thought about advancing my technique, but again, I got set on fire by the songs Ian played – [acoustic blues by] Reverend Gary Davis – and Ian showed me that stuff. At the end of summer 1960, I spent four months in New York, hanging out and playing. Then I came back to DC and Jack [Casady] recorded me doing the songs I'd learned. It's all I did for half a year is play that kind of music. I made a huge amount of progress.

What was the Village like in 1960 when you were playing at Gerde's in NYC?

Oh man! First of all I was 20 years old and *everything* is fun back then – new, exciting. Guitar-playing was the first time I had an identity as myself, rather than being my father's son. The Village looked like it does today, but everything was affordable back then. Everything was a little seedier – same thing with San Francisco, an inherently cool place for the same reasons. Beatniks, the Barbary Coast.

When you moved to northern California in the early 1960s you befriended musicians who later became giants. What was Janis Joplin like?

I met Janis the first week I was in California. There was a hootenanny in town. Me and Janis

are sitting in this tiny backstage area in a storefront coffee shop. She needed an accompanist. We rehearsed backstage and I realised immediately that this was a really important American singer. I'd never met anybody like that, but especially my own age. The Janis that I knew in that era was not "Pearl", the rock'n'roll Janis. She was a woman who took her place in the universe as a blues singer seriously.

What about Jerry Garcia?

Jerry was married and had a kid, that sort of made him an adult (*laughs*). Even though we were the same age, he wasn't going to school, he was supporting a family – and he's playing music! He was really good at what he did. He was outgoing – a fun guy to be around. I'm not his shrink and it's not up to me to say, but it seems to me as an outsider that what the Dead became in our culture became a millstone around his neck.

David Crosby?

[Paul] Kantner shared an apartment with Crosby in [LA neighbourhood] Venice. One of the things was even though he could play a guitar in a straight tuning, he rarely did. I did drop-D for Embryonic Journey and Good Shepherd, but I would [rarely] use alternative tunings. That was forward-thinking for us folkies back then. He was as abrasive as he's known to be today, but in a lovable way 'cos he liked me (*laughs*), so I've never been attacked by David. But the David we see – outwardly self-confident, opinionated – that's David.

Of the future Jefferson Airplane members, who did you meet first?

I met Kantner first in 1962. He was living in a surfer shack in Santa Cruz. In his folk act he used a Pete Seeger long-necked banjo and 6- and 12-string guitars. He always liked vocal harmonies and whenever he could, he'd

gravitate towards putting together an act that had three-part harmonies. He liked having female voices around. What happened in the Airplane was percolating in his brain years before as far as vocal harmonies.

You've called Kantner "the catalyst" for Jefferson Airplane.

The Airplane was an interesting animal. It would never have happened without the interaction between Marty and Paul. Marty had been in the "commercial music business". He had a recording contract, cut records, he was interested in making hits. Paul wanted to do that also, but Paul wanted to do that his way. So the Airplane would never have happened without the two of them. They realised early on that they were gonna be important to each other. Their vision for the band involved a female voice – initially Signe Anderson, Grace later. In the beginning, Marty was the driving force of the outfit – he had the vision at the time. [But] Paul made things special because he was so far left-field in terms of commercial music. That lack of conservatism was a big deal with Jefferson Airplane.

The Airplane – all six of you – redefined commercial by combining these elements.

True. Back then when we talked about commercial music, we knew exactly what we were talking about. Commercial folk was Peter, Paul & Mary, The Chad Mitchell Trio, The Kingston Trio – these slick acts that were drawing from a folkie well, but polished. The first Airplane record, *Jefferson Airplane Takes Off*, is a folk rock album, *Surrealistic Pillow* is a rock'n'roll album. As soon as we had the opportunity to make songs longer, we did. With unformatted FM radio stations it no longer mattered as much.

What about Grace Slick?

Signe went off to deal with her family and Grace fell into our laps. Grace was a game-

A LIFE IN PICTURES

Jorma's journey: Kaukonen takes off.

1 Badges of honour: young scout Jorma keeps his eyes peeled for danger.

2 "I'd never met anybody like that": Jorma accompanies Janis Joplin, 1962. "She took her place in the universe as a blues singer seriously."

3 Cover stars: Jefferson Airplane become the faces of the new Californian rock, *Life* magazine, June 1968.

4 Airplane, circa 1970 (from left) Marty Balin, Jack Casady, Paul Kantner, Jorma, Grace Slick, Spencer Dryden.

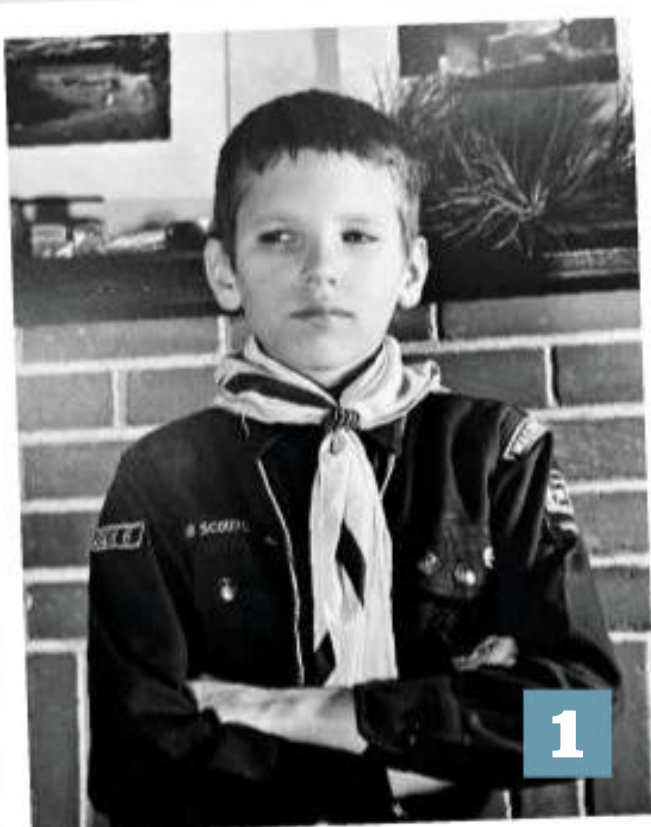
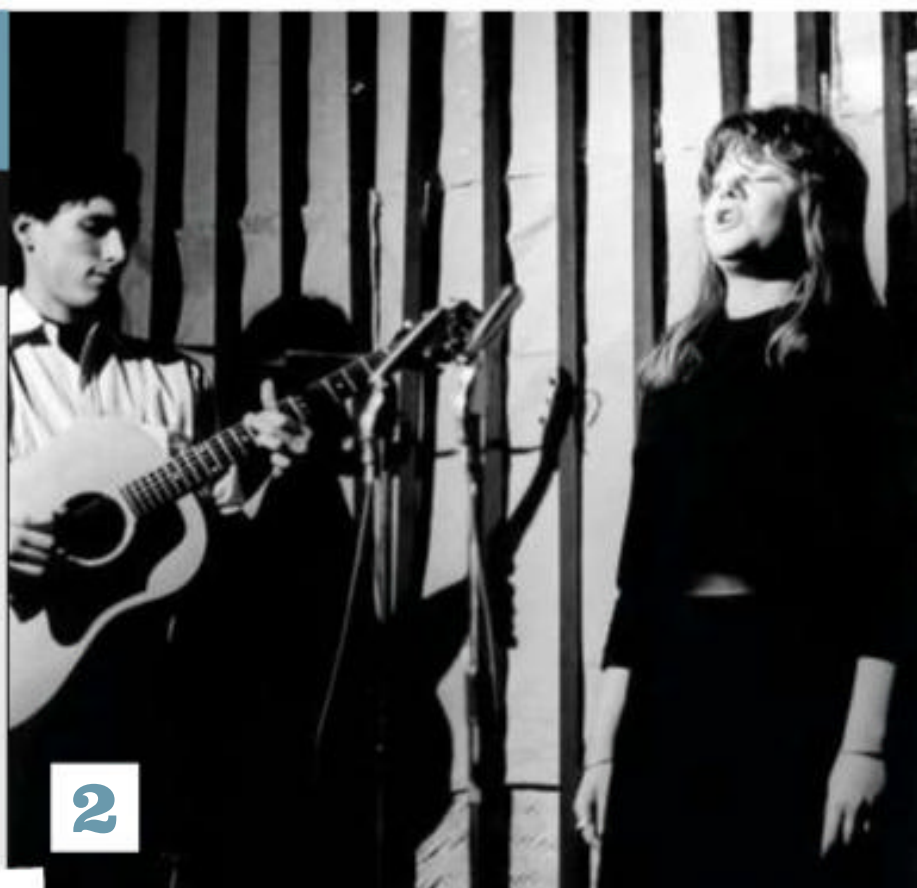
5 Hot Tuna, 1972: (from left) Casady, Papa John Creach, Kaukonen, Sammy Piazza.

6 The Chet Baker years: Jorma at the Automatt studios, San Francisco, June 1980.

7 "Grace was a maverick. She had no verbal boundaries whatsoever" Jorma gets a grip on Slick.

8 "We're not telepathic, but we read each other well": childhood friends Casady and (right) Kaukonen, their Hot Tuna is still tasty and on the menu.

9 "There's a physicality that goes along with it... being young and surfin' that giant wave." Jorma jams with Hot Tuna, Santa Rosa County Fairgrounds, June 1977.



changer. Now we see so many strong female figures in life in general, so much more than back then in a male-dominated business. Grace was a maverick. One of the lovable things about Grace, she had no verbal boundaries whatsoever – and by the way still doesn't.

You've credited [Paul Butterfield/Bob Dylan guitarist] Michael Bloomfield with teaching you the difference between an amplified guitar and an electric guitar.

When I was a kid I played electric guitar in a band Jack and I had. Basically it was a 6-string guitar that was loud enough for me to play with another electric guitar, bass and drums. It was just a guitar that was louder – there was no sustain. Mike was the first guy I knew who showed me what he was doing. We'd listen to these blues guys like Hubert Sumlin or Buddy Guy or Muddy playing slide guitar in a way we'd never heard before. When they moved from the acoustic version of what they did before they left the South, something changed because when you turn on an amplifier loud you start to get natural compression and sustain. To me, that's an electric guitar.

[Paul Butterfield Blues Band album] *East-West* [with Bloomfield] was one of the seminal albums of all time. When the Butterfield Band played the Fillmore [Auditorium, in San Francisco], Mike needed a place to stay and I lived near the Fillmore. [Promoter Bill] Graham asked me if Mike and his wife could stay with me, so they did. I loved the music he played, though I had no idea how to do any of that yet. He took me under his wing and showed me what was going on in this world.

Embryonic Journey is an extraordinary song – you captured optimism in an instrumental.

As Reverend Davis said, "The Lord give me that song!" I wish I could tell you how that came to pass. I was obviously in an in-the-moment process that I was able to capture as it happened. I was fooling around in a drop-D tuning in a workshop I was giving. A friend said, "You oughta check that out." [So] I hammered it into a song. It just made sense to me. I agree – it's an optimistic sound that invites introspection.

You've mentioned George Harrison's solo in She's A Woman as an influence.

“Guitar playing was the first time I had an identity as myself, rather than being my father's son.”

It was the first time I dropped acid. I'm driving my friend's Volkswagen and wound up in rush hour and a big semi-truck came up behind me and it looked gigantic. I'd been agonising over the place of electric guitar in rock'n'roll and *She's A Woman* came on the radio at that moment! I heard what George was doing as a lead guitar player, the way it fit into the track and it just made sense to me.

***Surrealistic Pillow* comes out, you have two Top 10 hits with *Somebody To Love* and *White Rabbit*. You're a rock star. You're on the cover of *Life* magazine. How'd that change your life?**

We became internationally known in a way

I couldn't have conceived of in a million years. A lot of doors opened, we were making money... This sums it up – my father had always been indifferent at best. But when we got on the cover of *Life* magazine, he realised his son had a real job. (*Laughs*)

Even before the Grateful Dead, the Airplane was considered the house band of the hippy generation. What is a hippy?

The hippy thing was a productive community: artists, shopkeepers, musicians – artists of all sorts. Not just kids panhandling on Haight Street. San Francisco was a small town, everybody knew each other. My hippy memory is *that*, [while] the memory of the world is the Summer of Love, flower children, that stuff. Now tie-dye is the national flag of what people considered hippies should be. Hippy predates tie-dye.

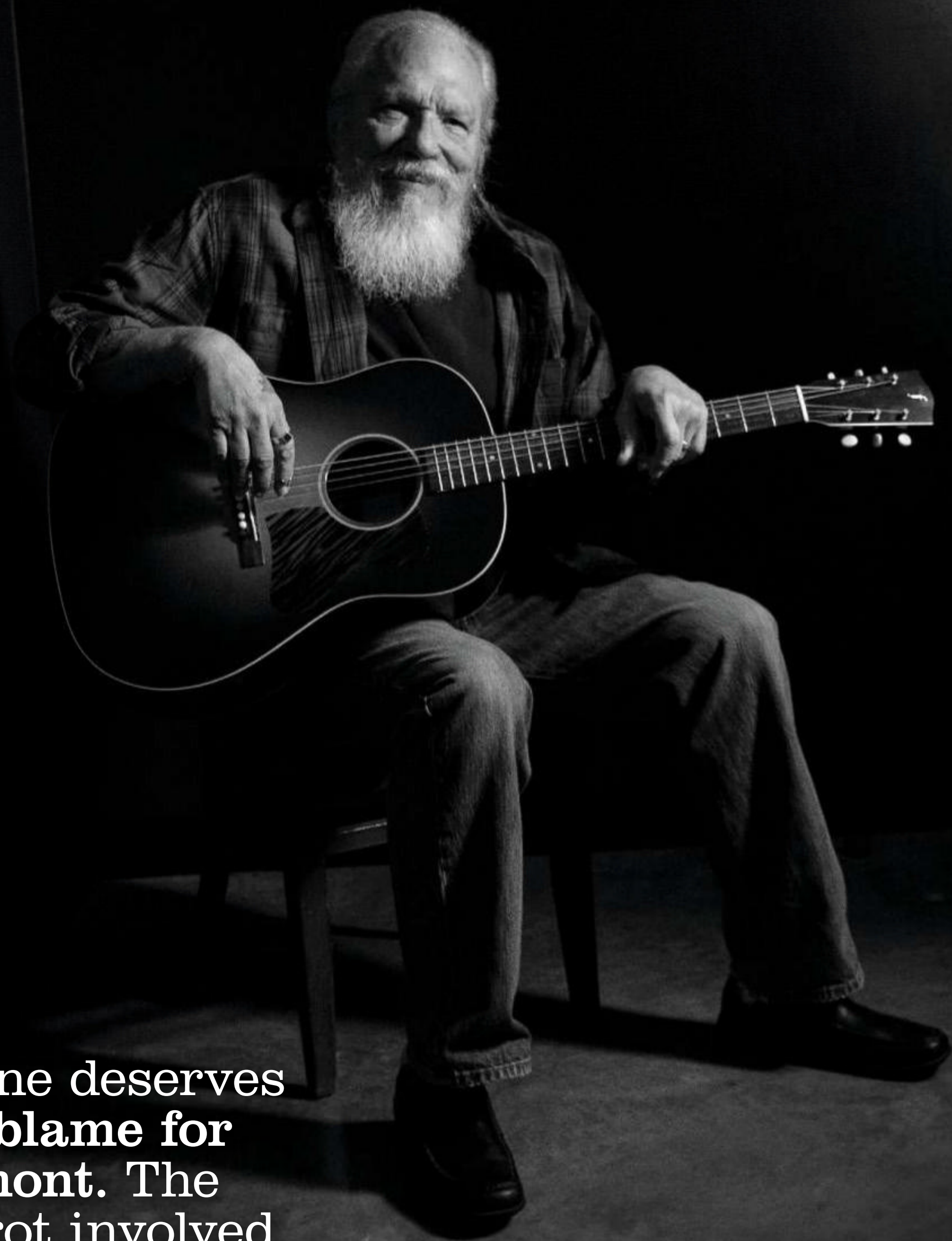
You played the trifecta of rock festivals: Monterey, Woodstock, Altamont.

There were lots of big festivals back then – why do we focus on those? Monterey was a departure point. Consider all the performers: Ravi

Shankar, Hendrix, Janis, The Who – this incredible collection of characters. If you've been to the Monterey fairgrounds, it wasn't that big. But it's important – all of a sudden rock'n'roll was dignified by having a festival. Then Woodstock – you couldn't script that in a million years. It just turned into what it did and all of a sudden we're talking about this iconic festival a half century later. There were zero amenities, a dearth of porta-potties, it was rainy. But it was also magical. Who knows how those things play out? Altamont – yeah, it was terrible and the Angels punched Marty. But everyone deserves some blame. The bands got involved in something we knew was specious, but we went. The audience expecting a ➤



"I'm a lucky guy":
Jorma Kaukonen,
City Winery, New
York City, 2021.



“Everyone deserves
some blame for
Altamont. The
bands got involved
in something we
knew was specious.”

◀ free show demanded all kinds of shit – and they got all kinds of shit. The people who put it on – it seemed like a bad idea from the beginning. It was just one of those things that didn't work out in a big way.

For a band that only lasted seven years, it's startling how quickly the Airplane's music shifted from electric folk tunes to elaborate psychedelic epics.

Surrealistic Pillow is a great rock'n'roll album, but it's transitional in our history. The songs are still airplay-friendly. With *After Bathing At Baxter's* we turned the pigs loose. We were playing loud, long – the freedom of that stuff. One of the magic [things] about the Airplane

was I'm working with guys and gals who are writing *really interesting songs*. They weren't just three- and four-chord songs, some were magnum opuses. Think Eskimo Blue Day or We Can Be Together. As the lead guitarist, it was more than challenging, it was *really fun* to figure out stuff to play with those songs. And that made me shine as a player; the songs were out of the ordinary.

What was the genesis of Hot Tuna?

Jack and I had been playing together before rocks and water. We'd spent a lot of time [with] me playing acoustic and Jack playing through his little bass amp in hotel rooms. We developed something that people now take

for granted: amplified acoustic guitar with electric bass, which wasn't common in those days. When the Airplane started to come in for a landing, the time we spent with Tuna became more important. As members of the Airplane, we could write our own ticket, so Tuna got a record deal immediately. We cast our net around and all of a sudden it came up with a bunch of fish and we became Hot Tuna (*laughs*). How's that for following a metaphor?

Speaking of metaphors, why did the Airplane crash?

You'd get six different opinions on this. It just wasn't as much fun any more. In the beginning we were always present for sessions whether it

was basic or overdubs. Towards the end we'd play together on basics, but nobody's around for overdubs. For me it had run its course.

Hot Tuna's first album was acoustic, but with subsequent albums, you became a hard rock band. That stuff was cranked really high.

Totally. You gotta put things in the context of time. In some ways I play better now than I did then. But there's a certain magic to being young. Remember the mountain of equipment we had back then? That's never gonna happen again – and that's a good thing. We'd all be stone-deaf right now. There's a physicality that goes along with it, with being young and surfin' that giant wave. Those were magical times. So much of that has to do with the energy that *all* of us – audience and band – brought to the venue.

What's your musical relationship with Jack?

We've been friends since we were kids –that's the anchor. We're not telepathic, but we read each other well most of the time. The guys you like to play with are the guys you can establish the kind of communication where you can focus on what the song requires rather than what your ego demands. Jack and I are really different people, but even as kids we respected each other as artists and as people. That's what counts.

Tuna broke up in 1978 and by the '80s you were writing songs such as To Hate Is To Stay Young. That's a different Jorma writing.

They're the same Jorma. All the things I did in that period of time was working with people I had no emotional connection to whatsoever. In order for me to deal with [my personal life] I had to shut everything off.

While the '80s may been a mixed period for you, you had a band with two jazz giants: Rashied Ali and Jaco Pastorius.

I split up with my first wife in '84 and hopped in this ratty van and moved to the East Coast. I started this band There Goes The Neighborhood. This is utterly politically incorrect today, but we called it that 'cos we had a black guy in the band: Rashied Ali – one of Coltrane's last drummers. He was one of the most interesting guys because as an artist he was so completely *out*. Rock'n'roll requires a certain amount of predictability. So that might be there with Rashied one night or it could be like he was playing with Trane.

Jaco wasn't big on rehearsing. He was one of the most amazingly talented [musicians]. He looked at me doing the fingerpicking thing and he said, "That's cool – show me how to do it." And I showed him some Rev. Gary Davis thing and he was able to learn it *immediately*. I went, "Holy shit!"

There was a lot of drinkin' and druggin' goin' on back in those days. That put a filter on everything. I played high for many years. Once you get sober and clean, my metaphor for playing stoned is put a tourniquet around your arm. When it gets numb, jerk off – it'll feel like somebody else is doing it.

You worked with Rick Danko – another brilliant bassist.

Danko lived in Woodstock and we became pals. He co-opted me into The Band's projects – I went to Japan and opened shows and sat in. He was a great bass player, but he played guitar too – he just always played the right stuff. We did acoustic gigs where he played guitar and sang and he was *always stunning*. He was an amazingly pure spirit in a less than pure world.

You shared certain habits as well.

Anyone who's aware of the rules of the road

surrounding opiate addictions knows that if you're addicted, you need to align your time to get through the day without getting sick. So Rick and I were supposed to do a radio show. It's just me and Rick in the room and we'd go in singularly and play our [solo] thing. I had my medicine in some hippy bag, but foolishly left it in the anteroom, went and did my interview, came back – and it wasn't there! Now Rick – God bless him – was offended that I would *think* he would even steal my stash, but I know he did. But he was such a lovable guy, I still couldn't get mad at him.

Grace, Marty and, for a while, Paul had huge commercial success with Jefferson Starship, a band as packaged as Airplane was organic. And then the Airplane reunited for one LP and one tour in 1989. What happened?

We were doing an acoustic Hot Tuna job at the Fillmore and we got in touch with Grace and Paul. We all played together and did a couple

FLIGHT CASES

Jorma Kaukonen: Airplane and beyond, by Michael Simmons.

AIRPLANE AT THE LIMIT

Jefferson Airplane

★★★★★

Volunteers

(RCA VICTOR, 1969)



The Airplane's fifth LP serves as the Woodstock Nation's sonic manifesto, covering radical left-wing politics, the environment and the band's *sui generis* lysergic worldview.

Some of Kaukonen's finest studio work is here: his fuzzed, sizzling lead on Kantner's We Can Be Together is quintessential '60s rock guitar. He'd been singing and performing the traditional Good Shepherd since the early '60s (and still does) – here it's rock'n'roll.

JACK & JORMA BRANCH OUT

Hot Tuna

★★★★★

Burgers

(GRUNT, 1972)



Tuna's third album has a thrilling opener: the re-tooled traditional True Religion opens with Kaukonen's masterful acoustic hand gymnastics; after an instrumental verse

he comes in singing with full rhythm section and violinist Papa John Creach's bowed blue notes. The tempo then shifts and Kaukonen re-enters on wall-melting electric. The rest of the record is similarly sublime, including instrumental and fan favourite Water Song that, like Embryonic Journey, enters mystical realms with nary a lyric.

THE ACOUSTIC REVERIE

Jorma Kaukonen

★★★★★

Quah

(GRUNT, 1974)



Another side of Kaukonen. One of his lesser-known talents is as a balladeer of love songs and there are several here on his first solo album. Genesis and Song For The North Star have endured as two of his finest compositions. Underpinned with his acoustic fingerpicking, they're simple and tender with tasteful string arrangements. Old friend Tom Hobson contributes guitar and vocals. A refreshingly gentle, ruminative collection.

of Airplane songs. That set the stage for the reunion. Grace got these big LA management companies on board and they got Ron Nevison to produce the record. Ron had done a bunch of the Starship records and looking back at it from my lofty pinnacle today, I think he wanted to recreate the hit machine the Starship was in the '80s, but the Airplane is a cumbersome animal and it didn't work out. We weren't easy to work with in the '60s and I guarantee you in the late '80s we weren't easy to work with either. So instead of this nucleus band – the classic line-up is me, Jack, Spencer, Paul, Grace and Marty – that sort of nucleus didn't exist [because] we had extraneous players.

I've listened to the record recently; it's an artfully produced '80s-style record. Like that little song of mine Ice Age, it started out as just an acoustic song. [On the album] there's all kinds of ear candy and stereo shit moving around and layers of guitars. So it was a strange animal that, speaking for myself, I could never have conceived of in a million years. I think I expected the [Airplane's] magic to be bestowed on me one more time.

You did bring the magic back, but you did it as a solo artist. Your story over the last 25 years is one of you taking the initiative.

When we moved out here to south-east Ohio, I really went back to basics. I did a couple of fingerstyle records, that kind of thing. Without consciously knowing what I was doing, I rediscovered who I think I am underneath all this other stuff as an artist. I play electric guitar and I love to play with other people, but my passion is acoustic guitar. And it's not being a chops-head acoustic guitarist, it's about telling stories. I'm still playing songs today that I played over 50 years ago. There are these anchor points that are literally the story of my life, so when I learned Death Don't Have No Mercy in 1960, I'd only known one person who'd died. But at the same time there was a reality context in that song – and of course over the years. That's an anchor song for me. And I've got a number of those. When I do a show, I'm telling the story of my life. There may be guitar geeks out there [in the audience], but for some reason there are people who are interested in my story and don't mind hearing it again.

The basic chords and lyrics to these songs stay the same, but what changes?

I'm more consistent, I have more subtleties than I had when I was younger. There's no substitute for being young – there's a certain passion. It's not a negative when you don't have that any more, it's just more mature on another level.

Tone is really important. Playing whatever's required, letting each note live to its fullness of tone. It goes back to when I was a kid and I went in my grandmother's tile bathroom and strummed a chord on the guitar and you could hear all those notes ring out. That's the kind of tone I look for today.

You celebrated your 80th birthday last December with an internet concert. Vanessa arranged for testimonials from dozens of friends, fans, musicians. You're part of people's lives, many who grew up with your music.

I'm a lucky guy – I got my health, my dexterity and I'm surrounded by people younger than me. I'm identified with certain periods of time for a lot of reasons, but my ability to keep on keepin' on transcends that. I've been around long enough and viable to be part of people's lives for generations. Whether it's you on your side of the stage or me on my side, we were all there together. You can't buy shared time. 

The River Flows Vol. 2 by John Hurlbut & Jorma Kaukonen is available now.

T H E E L

I N T H

E P H A N T

In 1990, **WORLD PARTY**'s *Goodbye Jumbo* heralded a restoration of '60s pop values and promised the big time for its eccentric *auteur*, **KARL WALLINGER**. But the obsessiveness that made a masterpiece could have cost him his life, and a "horribly clandestine" flit by his band didn't help. Thirty years on, can **MOJO** detect new, faint strains of genius at work? "It's useless to try and find out what I'm up to," he warns **JAMES McNAIR**.

Portrait: **KEVIN WESTENBERG**

"PAY, YOU WILL PAY TOMORROW", warned World Party's debut single Ship Of Fools. Its soulful, perfect pop was a Trojan Horse for a stark environmental message, and in April 1987, it was the minor US hit no one saw coming. Industry suitors were quick to react, though, and high-tailed it to Bedfordshire, England. It was there, in a dilapidated rectory, that Karl Wallinger had made World Party's *Private Revolution* almost single-handedly, pseudonymously crediting his guitars to "Rufus Dove", and his harp-playing to "Martin Finnucane", a character in Flann O'Brien's *The Third Policeman*.

"They'd heard there was a dumb kid in Woburn writing hits," says Wallinger today. "There was this beauty parade of visiting managers." Among them was Steve Fagnoli, then already employed by another, rather more famous multi-instrumentalist. "I was a sucker for Prince," says Wallinger.

He can sing a rainbow:
(left) Karl Wallinger keeps
the flowers out of his air,
London, October 22, 1990.

"I was like, 'Take me to Minneapolis. Take me to your leader...'"

Wallinger had already witnessed The Purple One's genius firsthand. In December 1984, he was still playing keyboards in The Waterboys when they opened for U2 on The Unforgettable Fire Tour. In Chicago the support act "nabbed Bono's limo", side-stepped U2's set, and went to see Prince instead.

"It was incredible, but having listened to *Purple Rain* smashed one night me and Mike [Scott; Waterboys frontman] had already concluded that Prince was the Messiah. You know: I Would Die 4 U and all that..."

Better yet, with Fagnoli now his manager, Wallinger could touch the hem of Prince's garment. He recalls a New Year's Eve dinner at Paisley Park with Prince and Miles Davis jamming inches from his food. And a Mercedes ride across Paris to the Bois Du Boulogne apartment that was once home to Edward and Mrs Simpson – and was at that time rented by Prince.

"He disappeared into the bedroom in a brown polka-dot number and came out in a blue polka-dot number. There was a ➤

E R O O M



1984 / PW 0543
THE WATERBOYS 1984
 L - R - MARTYN SWAIN, KARL WALLINGER, MIKE SCOTT,
 KEVIN WILKINSON, ANTHONY THISTLETHWAITE



Never too late to party:
 Wallinger hunkers down in
 the studio, 1990; (inset) with
 The Waterboys (second left),
 1984; (below) World Party
 backstage at the Warfield
 Theatre, San Francisco,
 September 10, 1990 (from
 left) Guy Chambers, Max Edie,
 Wallinger, Dave Catlin-Birch,
 Chris Sharrock.

“PRINCE DISAPPEARED INTO THE
 BEDROOM IN A BROWN POLKA-
 DOT NUMBER AND CAME OUT
 IN A BLUE POLKA-DOT NUMBER.
 MEANWHILE, I WAS PLAYING
 THE PIANO VERY DRUNK.”

KARL WALLINGER

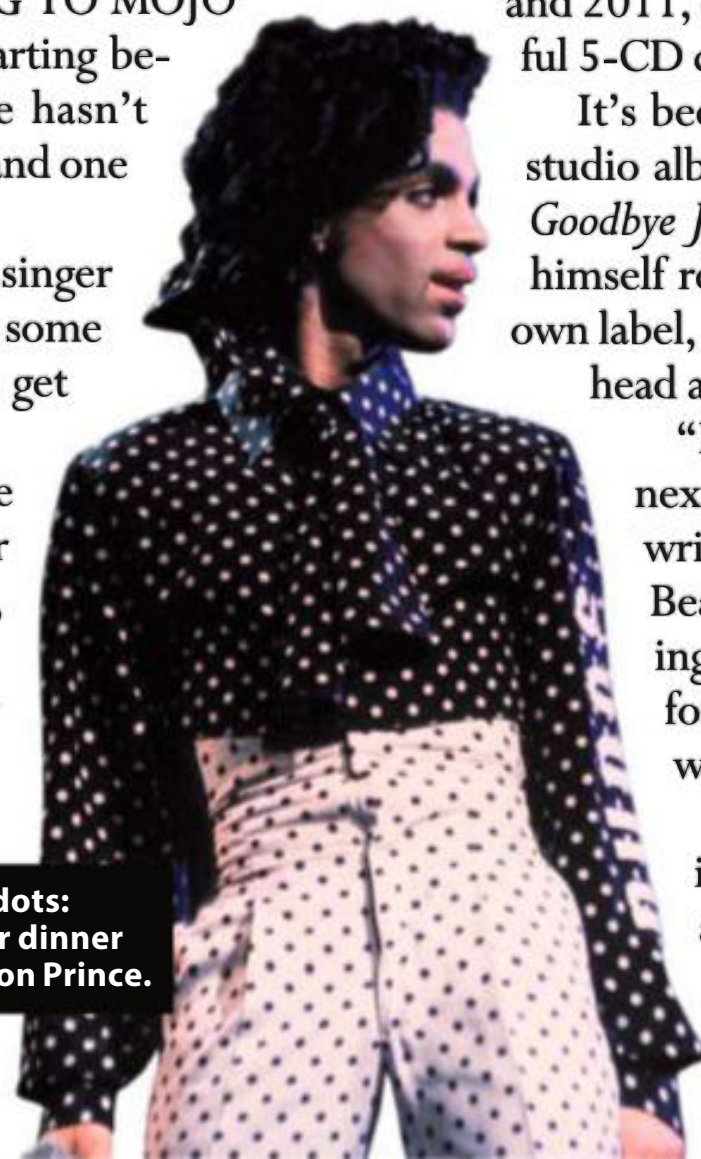
◀ beautiful young Moroccan woman with him and he romanced her by the window. Meanwhile, I was playing the piano very drunk and ended up falling on the floor.

“Like most mere mortals, I was a little in awe of him,” Wallinger concludes, smiling. “I think the only thing Prince assimilated from me was those little hexagonal glasses he wore on the cover of *Sign ‘O’ The Times*.”

JUNE 16, 2021. WALLINGER IS TALKING TO MOJO in his garden in Hastings, house martins darting behind him. “Pandemic?” he says. “My life hasn’t changed. I’ve been out three times in 15 months, and one of those was to the chiropodist.”

Together with sculptor wife Suzie Zamit, the singer moved to the town he’s dubbed ‘Nashville-on-Sea’ some four years ago. “I put the bird-feeders out, then get into my music head,” he smiles.

As Wallinger moves indoors, MOJO spies the inner sanctum of Seaview Studios, named for earlier incarnations in Woburn, then Islington, but this time actually offering a salt water vista. As he skins up and MOJO mentions the new World Party LP he hopes to release early in 2022, there’s a playful caveat: “It’s useless to try and find out what I’m up to.” Wallinger also reveals that no one else – not even



Join the dots:
 Wallinger dinner
 companion Prince.



his family – has heard the new material he’s been writing.

Even before the February 2001 brain aneurysm that almost ended him in a Center Parcs resort in Suffolk, Wallinger was a ruminant creator, forever chewing the cud. Five years of rehabilitation slowed him further as he painstakingly re-learned guitar and piano. Then, eventually, after acclaimed World Party live shows in 2007 and 2011, came 2012’s *Arkeology*, a typically eclectic and playful 5-CD clear-out of his ever-congested sock drawer.

It’s been 21 years, though, since World Party’s last new studio album, *Dumbing Up*; 31 years since his masterpiece, *Goodbye Jumbo*. And though Wallinger has recently busied himself re-releasing his back catalogue on vinyl through his own label, you sense he’d sooner keep pottering than stick his head above the parapet.

“In World Party I thought I was writing songs for the next Live Aid, a kind of global unity thing,” he told this writer in 2000. “When I was young, the music of The Beatles and Motown and Sly [Stone] was such a unifying force, so I was singing about unity and about how, for me, the natural world is one of the few real truths, whereas human society is a fuck-up.”

A torch-carrier for the ’60s pop canon, Wallinger, like his Liverpool contemporaries The La’s and US counterparts Jellyfish, sought that special



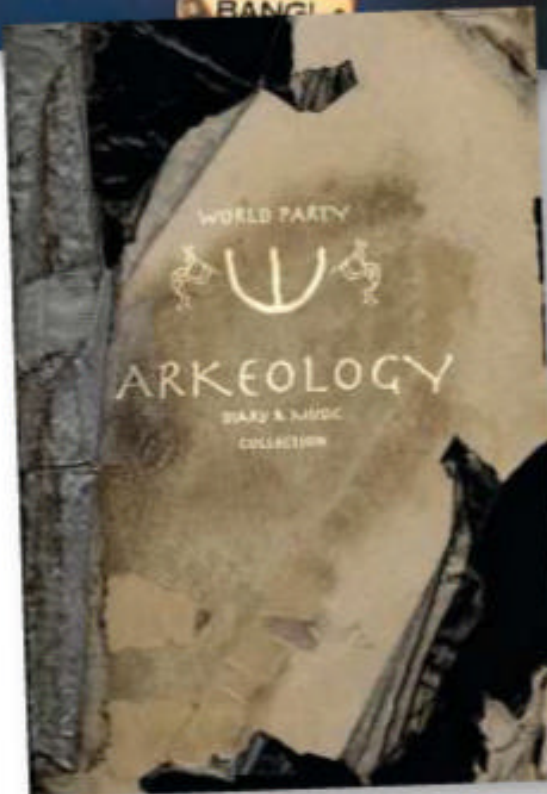
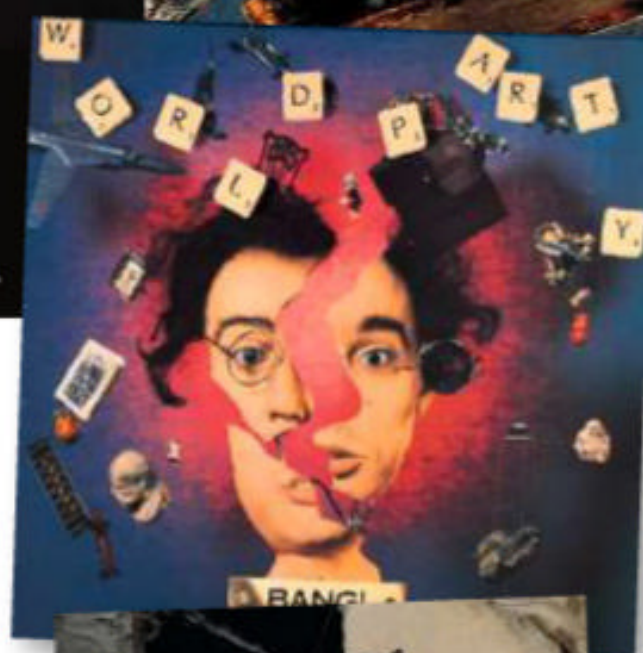
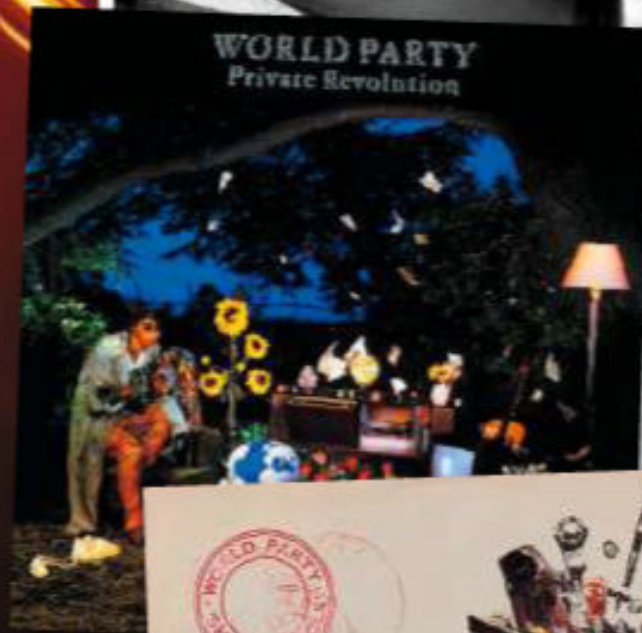
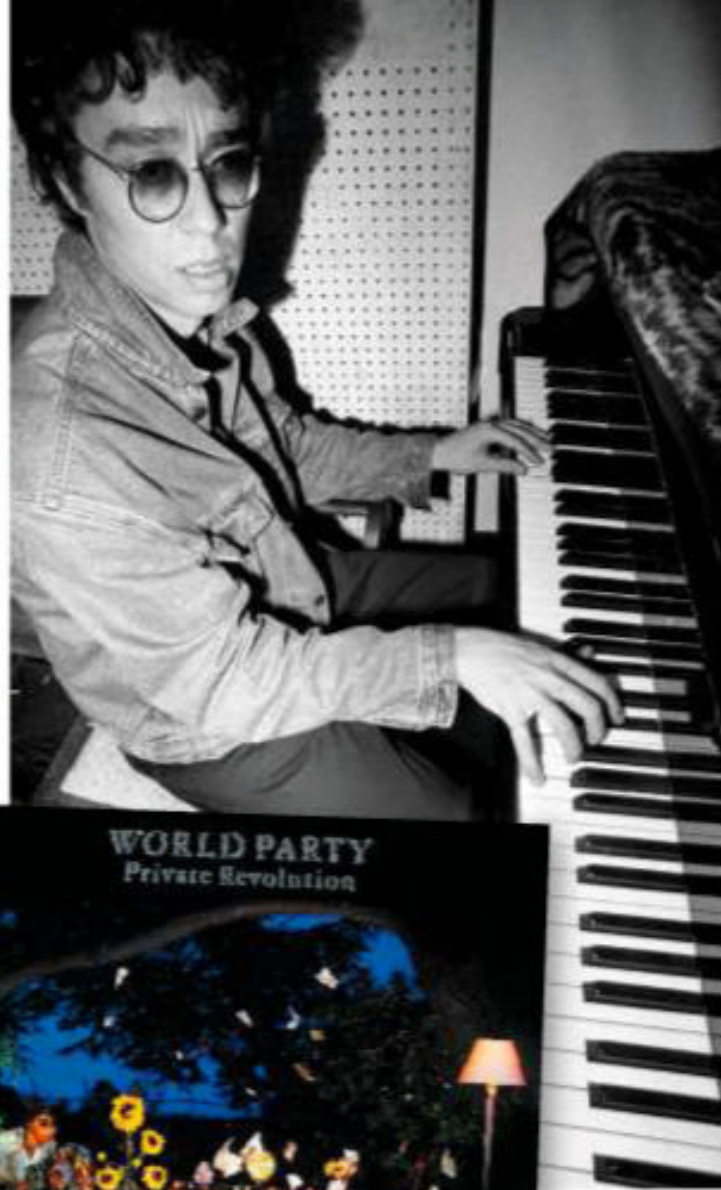
Bang on: Wallinger the rainbow warrior on-stage at Wadsworth Theatre, UCLA, September 9, 1990; (right) "writing songs for the next Live Aid", 1990; (insets) *Private Revolution* (1986); *Ship Of Fools* and *Message In The Box* 45s; *Bang!* (1993); *Arkeology* (2012).

sauce that made The Fabs fab. The '80s were not for him ("Spandau Ballet? Foghorn plus racket"), and Britpop and The Beatles' *Anthology* were still half a decade in the future. "I was just trying to return to a musical place I liked," he claimed. But World Party's green message was prescient and heartfelt, a fervent post-script to '80s consumerism.

"I still don't think about much except music and current affairs," says Wallinger today. "Meanwhile pop music has a whole different set of rules. I hear it, but I don't get it, really." He scratches at close-cropped grey hair, pulls on his spliff. "I guess I'm hoping that a 63-year-old Welshman can say something relevant, post-apocalypse. Who knows how close it is to a parting shot?"

GROWING UP IN PRESTATYN, WALES, Karl Edmond De Vere Wallinger spent many Sunday mornings dancing to Buddy Holly and Motown 45s with his elder sisters. He gained a more formal musical education in choir school at Eton – "Think Tom Brown's Schooldays, with these awful, elitist people throwing pennies at us out the window" – and then at Charterhouse in Surrey, where he'd won a scholarship to study piano and oboe.

Having moved to London for a job at ATV Music Publishing in 1981, Wallinger also worked as musical director of The Rocky



Horror Show and covered Shalamar and Sly & The Family Stone in short-lived band The Out before joining The Waterboys in 1983.

He contributed organ, piano and backing vocals to 1984's *A Pagan Place*, but Waterboys leader Mike Scott promoted him somewhat on 1985's *This Is The Sea*, for which Wallinger received a co-production credit, co-wrote Don't Bang The Drum, and helped shape The Whole Of The Moon's distinctive sonics.

"We definitely had some great times, and there's still a part of me that thinks it would have been interesting to continue," says Wallinger. "It was my first experience of record releases and going on big tours, but it wasn't like I was going to take a lead vocal and by album six I'd be doing six tracks and replacing Mike, you know?"

"Karl was always there for me," Mike Scott tells MOJO today. "He was a great engineer, got great sounds, [and] was very patient while I would play nine different guitars. Reefers may have been involved, and some all-nights. We had a lot of laughs and philosophical discussions."

Was Wallinger's departure inevitable?

"From the day I met him he was always writing his own songs, so yes. The label I was with, Ensign, gave him a record deal and he deserved it, of course, but it wasn't the smartest move if they'd wanted to keep him in The Waterboys."

IN 1989, *PRIVATE REVOLUTION'S* *Ship Of Fools* was a shoo-in for Greenpeace's *Rainbow Warriors* compilation. It was World Party's 1990 follow-up *Goodbye Jumbo*, though, which really chimed with green-leaning listeners. Its Eden-like vision of environmental stewardship and mutual tolerance was notably feel-good, as transatlantic radio favourite *Message In The Box* underlined.

"I wanted to personify the world and sing about her," Wallinger told me in 2000, when I asked about his vision circa *Jumbo*. "I always thought it would have been great if Otis Redding's *Try A Little Tenderness* had been about the planet. Plus, if I stand on top of a mountain Julie Andrews-style, the hills *do* seem to be alive with the sound of music. You can say whatever you like about eco whatever, but if you fuck up the environment you're going to die."

By now he had moved his Seaview operation to Islington, north London, renting "a grotty old paint shop that made effects pedal boards for people like Steve Howe." There, with "Abbey Road aspirations", and help from Joe Blaney, engineer on Prince's *Love-sexy* at Paisley Park – "his settings for vocals are still

crayoned on my mixing desk" – Wallinger was able to craft an eclectic landmark with beatboxes and slide guitar, Lennon-like piano ballads, uptempo party-funk and languorous, falsetto-driven soul.

Better yet, World Party was now a 'proper' band, its members including former Icicle Works and La's man Chris Sharrock (more recently drummer in Liam Gallagher's Beady Eye and in Noel Gallagher's High Flying Birds), and, more crucially, keyboardist ➤

◀ Guy Chambers, future writer-producer to the stars.

“It was fun to have a band,” says Wallinger. “We came back from the pub one night and did a version of Good Vibrations. It’s still unfinished, but still.”

“The sessions for *Jumbo* were during the night,” says Chambers today. “So we’d get there about 5pm, have breakfast, then work until dawn. We smoked copious amounts of dope all through the night, every night.”

Even at the time, Chambers found Wallinger’s a challenging regime. “If you worked with Karl you had to get into his headspace. Everything was very slow and you had to be extremely patient. I was one of Karl’s principal cheerleaders at that point. We laughed a lot and I learned a lot from him, particularly about lyrics, but he was a terrible procrastinator and still is now.”

Wallinger concedes that, from start to finish, *Goodbye Jumbo* took “two or three years”. All the same, he knew it was something special. “I basically just enjoyed making music in a way that would never be so easy again,” he says. “All my stress dissipated to neutral, and I had this January where I slept like a baby.”

THE 1990 Q Magazine Awards saw *Goodbye Jumbo* pick up Album Of The Year. Wallinger melted when Paul McCartney approached his table and said, “Show Me To The Top! That’s the hit on that album!”

“It was like getting a letter from Santa,” he says. “Just the fact that Macca had heard my stuff meant so much.”

The near-unanimous acclaim for *Jumbo* should have been a powerful springboard, but gremlins meddled. A live broadcast of album closer Thank You World from the Kilburn National on Channel 4’s Live From The Dome was potentially Wallinger’s All You Need Is Love moment, but a catastrophic mix meant viewers heard little more than Guy Chambers’ backing vocals. Wallinger was devastated: “I watched 30 seconds on video at home then got into a warm bath and slit my wrists.”

But the more lasting damage, he says, came from Ensign’s insistence that he begin work on *Jumbo*’s follow-up immediately: “Nowadays you would tour the fuck out of the Q Award thing, but [late Ensign chief] Nigel Grainge was like, ‘No, you can’t go and support Neil Young in America – get back in the studio,’ and for me that meant three more years out of sight.”

Still, 1993’s *Bang!* arrived with a useful tailwind, and with David Catlin-Birch, sometime bassist for The Bootleg Beatles, now on board, it charted at Number 2 in the UK on the back of breezy single Is It Like Today?, described by Wallinger as “a précis of Bertrand Russell’s A History Of Western Philosophy in four verses.”

The *Bang!* era also had other consolations, not least a chance meeting with Sir George Martin at Air studios in Hampstead.

WORLD OF ECO

Five key songs from *Goodbye Jumbo*, with help from Karl Wallinger.



IS IT TOO LATE?

Prince’s influence was clear in the beatbox and vari-speed guitars. “It was one of the songs where people in the biz said, ‘Oh, he’s not pinpointing his market,’” says Karl. “But I’m not into pinpointing my market – I’m into enjoying my music.”

GOD ON MY SIDE

An outstanding piano ballad “partly influenced by [John Lennon’s] Mind Games”, *God On My Side* “is a plea for tolerance,”

says Wallinger. “I’m singing about all the religions of the world, but I need *your* God on my side, you know?”

WHEN THE RAINBOW COMES

Pop gold up to and including Sophia Ramos’s melting backing vocals at the fade, this joyous evocation of World Party’s utopian vision offers hope. “All I can remember about Sophia is that she was from New York and had bumped into Guy [Chambers] somewhere,” says Wallinger.

AND I FELL BACK ALONE

“How can we lie together/In bed and face to face/ And not see anyone at all?” Much of *Jumbo* looked outward, but not this stark break-up song. “It came along right at the end of the sessions. It’s not the sound of someone who’s having a great time emotionally, is it?”

AIN’T GONNA COME TILL I’M READY

“Paul McCartney and Motown,” says Wallinger. “Now there was a relationship.” Firing on a soulful low-end groove of gargantuan heft, *Ain’t Gonna Come...* suggests World Party and Stax had a thing going on, too.

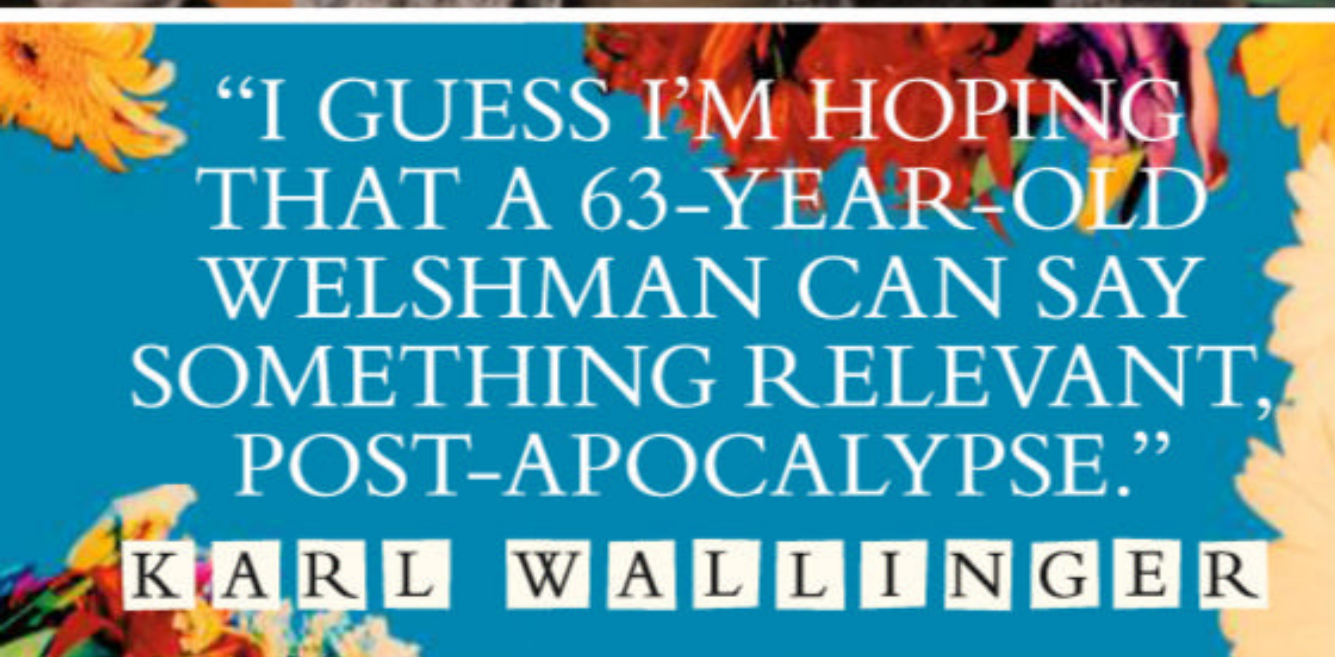
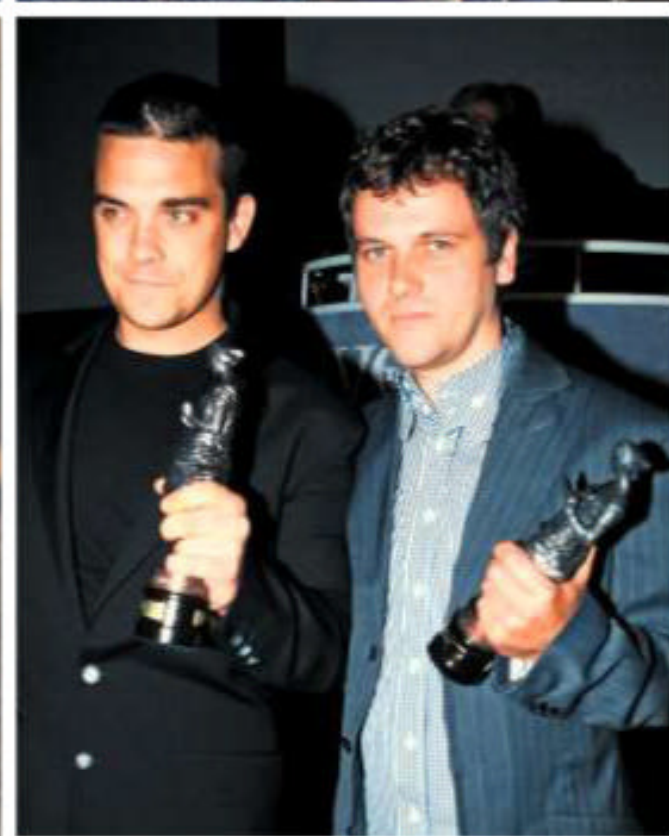
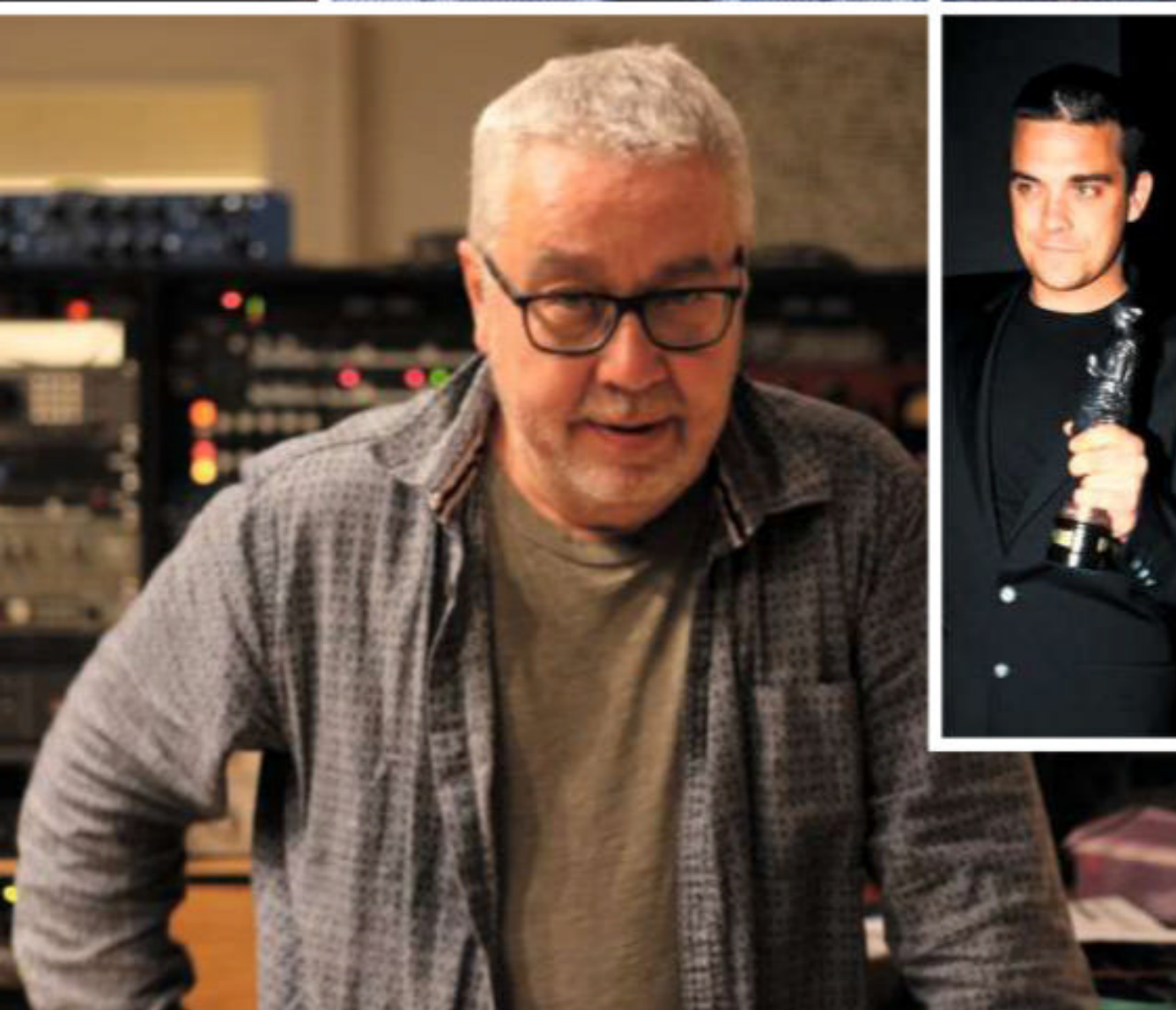
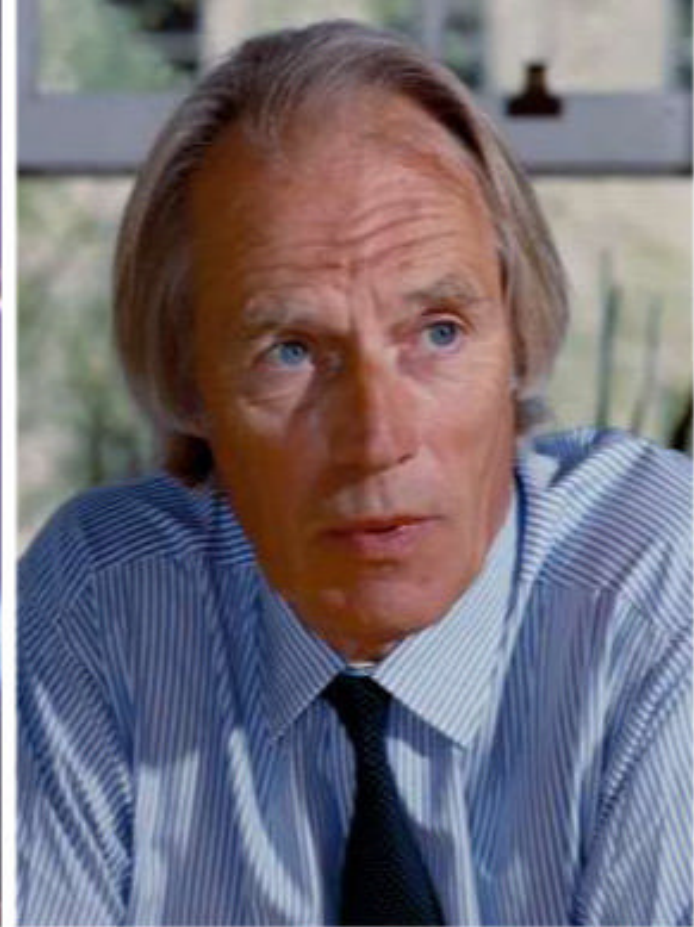


He’s the one: (clockwise from above) Karl Wallinger with Lee Mavers of The La’s, 1989; Wallinger live in London, 1990; Wallinger advisor George Martin in his Chrysalis office, May 5, 1987; in 1997 with Chrysalis/EMI execs Mark Collen (back, left) and JF Cecillon (front, right); Robbie Williams and Guy Chambers with one of their three Ivor Novello awards; taking a break in his Seaview studios, Hastings, September 2021.

“I was there in 1994 doing music for the film *Reality Bites*,” recalls Wallinger. “Me and Chris Sharrock came in late one morning and George happened to be standing in the foyer. He said, ‘What time do you call this? I’ve already done two tracks with Elton John.’ It was so lovely to be told off by him. We went giggling up

the stairs like naughty schoolboys thinking, ‘So that’s what it was like to be a Beatle!’”

It wasn’t Wallinger’s first encounter with Martin. Three or four years previously, sitting at the keyboard in Martin’s office at Chrysalis Records, The Beatles’ producer had given the singer a one-to-one masterclass on melody and harmony, Wallinger taking notes



and not letting on that he had his own version of Strawberry Fields Forever on a cassette in his pocket. The impact of this summit was considerable. Having canoed down the Nile of Beatles veneration for years, Wallinger had reached its source.

"I came out of there like Billy Bunter leaving a sweet shop," he says. "You have to remember that George was the steroids that made The Beatles go 'Boom!'"

IT WAS GUY CHAMBERS, WALLINGER SAID IN 2000, who was "the pushy guy who would cue me into the corner pocket" circa *Goodbye Jumbo*. "I've got to thank him for that."

But their relationship soured when, having bowed out on 1997's *Egyptology*, World Party's final major label release, Chambers recorded its Wallinger-penned piano ballad *She's The One* with Robbie Williams, using World Party's rhythm section, without Wallinger's knowledge. Williams's near-facsimile reached Number 1 in the UK in November 1999 and subsequently won a Brit Award for Single Of The Year.

"Thank God they did record it," says Wallinger today. "It kept me and the family in spaghetti when I was ill and couldn't work. But at the time it seemed horribly clandestine and then Robbie stole my band and I was like, 'What are you doing, guys?' I'm obviously a cunt."

"The only person we took was Chris Sharrock," argues Chambers in partial mitigation. "So just the drummer. I did try to take Dave Catlin-Birch, but he didn't want to leave. Rob [Williams] was so obviously heading towards stadiums and Chris saw which way the wind was blowing. You couldn't blame him – it was better money."

Chambers also says that "Karl's been a bit tricky with *She's The One*." As its writer, he has exercised his right to block video of Williams performing the song, "and for years he wouldn't acknowledge how useful [our version] has been for him. Karl's version is great, of course. It's the original. But when we recorded it I said to him, 'This version's a demo – let's do it properly.' Because, like so much of the World Party stuff, it was thrown together in the night. When I did it with Rob we put pop strings on it. If you want to make a hit record, sometimes putting out a demo isn't the best thing..."

Williams's version of *She's The One* would become ubiquitous at weddings and funerals. Meanwhile, Wallinger's major label career was ending, albeit at his own request. In 1998, frustrated by "a whole different regime that didn't seem to know anything about music," he extricated himself from EMI.

"I was originally signed to Ensign, then went through Chrysalis and Polygram before EMI bought up the whole world. I didn't want to do another album for a joke-nose-and-glasses brigade, so I said, 'Just give me my back catalogue and I'll walk.'"

Then in February 2001, just as World Party were gearing up for live dates that April, Wallinger's brain aneurysm struck. The years of apparently endless studio prevarication, spent chainsmoking obsessively, appeared to have caught up with him.

"I had a very unhealthy lifestyle and doctors will tell you everybody who smokes deserves to die horribly," he reflected, "but I think it had more to do with me playing oboe in my youth. There's a lot of pressure build-up with woodwind..."

Wallinger says he never felt like he was going to die, "although I could have done. I expected to feel a bit dodgy after they'd sawed my head in half, but what pissed me off most was waking up with a catheter in. Christmas shopping was fun, too. I had no peripheral vision and people thought I was bumping into them deliberately."

And today? Has the aneurysm changed his outlook on life?

"Well I save more donkeys than ever – let's put it like that."

WERE PEAK-PERIOD WORLD PARTY A BAND OUT of time? A truer, more sophisticated keeper of The Fabs' flame before Britpop, Oasis, and the sundry Beatles-ness that Guy Chambers and other producers have since sprinkled like fairy dust? Typically, Wallinger's take is not so straightforward.

"I definitely think we were feeding that multicore and expanding it," he says, "but it's a strange one, World Party. Not recommended for your sanity. We never really got there," he adds, exhaling spliff smoke and grinning. "Fate's not letting me travel as the crow flies."

So where does he fit in as a songwriter, as a musician? One of the Great British Eccentrics?

"That's probably more accurate than I care to think," he muses. "Karl Wallinger's music – has it fucked his mind? But music is the greatest thing for me, because it takes me somewhere that it's safe to be. Ultimately, I'm just a guy who makes noises in a room and plays them to as few people as possible (*laughs*). But I'm happy and I'll be back after these messages..."



World Party's Goodbye Jumbo album is reissued on vinyl by Seaview Records on October 29.

YESTERDAY

ONCE MORE



Resonant with a sadness you can't quite place, **CARPENTERS** music transcends its time and the kitsch niche that detractors would assign it. With pictures from a new book retracing their journey, and an exclusive interview with **RICHARD CARPENTER**, MOJO comes to terms with their tragedy, and legacy. "I lost my friend, my sister and my musical partner," hears **JIM IRVIN**. Photo: **JIM McCRARY**.



Calling occupants! Karen and Richard Carpenter in a 1972 Ferrari Daytona in an outtake from the cover shoot for Carpenters' 1973 album *Now & Then*, outside the family home in Downey, California.

Jim McCrary, Richard Carpenter Collection



male-female clones,” Carpenter replied. “The smiles were identical, and we liked and disliked the same things — and not just music: comedians, movies, just about everything.”

Their filial ESP, and harmony, pervaded the music that made these two kids from suburbia superstars around the world. But the pressures were great — Richard became addicted to Quaaludes; Karen to obsessive dieting, which turned into bulimia and anorexia — and times changed. As the 1980s arrived, Carpenters found themselves “radioactively square” and struggling for hits.

It’s hard to see over the other side of that hill when it looms in front of you. Karen wouldn’t make it over, though her music undoubtedly has. The ’90s saw hipsters including Sonic Youth

and American Music Club queuing up to appear on tribute album *If I Were A Carpenter*. Forever unmoored from the context that might once have made it seem obsolete, Karen’s voice, admired by everyone from John Lennon to Barbra Streisand, sails on, secure in its unshowy magnificence.

Richard recovered from his addiction. Karen was killed by hers in February 1983, aged just 32. He has spent the years since curating their legacy, reshaping, remixing, tweaking and caressing the songs. And on a new record, *The Richard Carpenter Songbook*, he plays them on a single piano, stripped back to their melodies. He doesn’t do many interviews, but the confluence of the new book and album has persuaded him to spend some time with MOJO.



“WE WERE WASPS FROM THE SUBURBS, AS WHITE AS WONDERBREAD, JUST WHAT THE WRITERS AND THE RECORD LABELS DIDN’T WANT.”
RICHARD CARPENTER

When the Carpenters started, did you want to be entertainers, pop stars? What was your ambition?

We wanted to make records, first and foremost. I don’t have much of a talent in anything except as an arranger and a producer. And I was born with the ability to hear a song that was not necessarily a hit at the time and store it away thinking, “This song would be a hit if done this way.” We’ve Only Just Begun, for example.

Karen had this marvellous voice and we were born to complement one another’s talents. Most sibling groups are all singers: Ames Brothers, Andrew Sisters, Everly Brothers, but I was a background singer, not a soloist, and we blended beautifully. It was my job to find the songs and arrange them. I can’t think of another example in pop where one sibling was the A&R man and the other was the star!

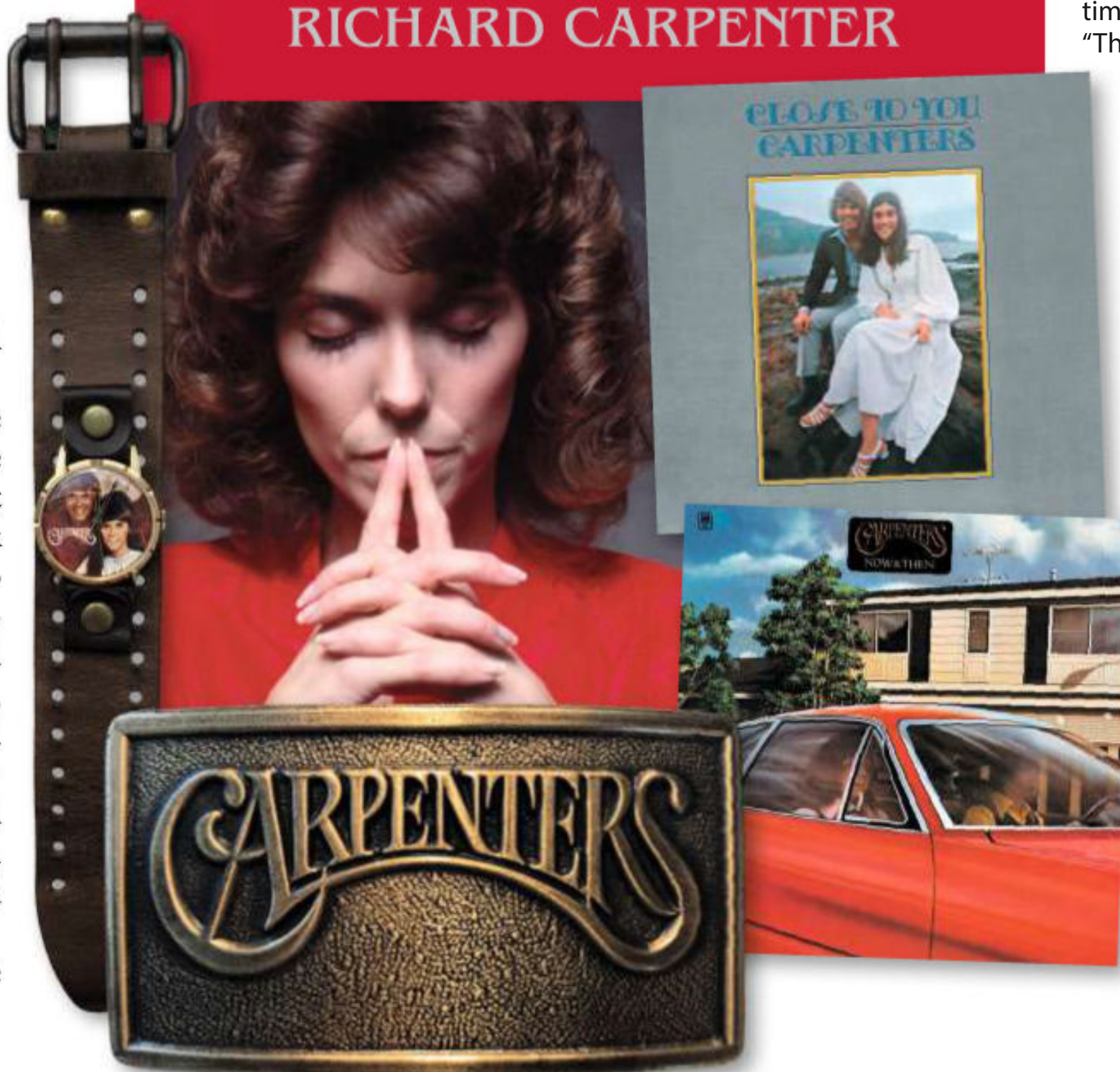
You were in complete control of your material.

Yes. Our demo was turned down by any number of labels before it got to Herb Alpert at A&M, which was the Tiffany’s of labels at the time. They were known for letting the artist do what the artist wanted to do, with very little input from head office. Karen was 19 and ➤

THERE IS SOME-THING ineffable about Carpenters, that sugar-frosted Trojan Horse filled with longing. Their apparently sunny and unthreatening music shimmers between euphoria and sadness, diaphanous enough to see through to some other possibility, one perhaps unintended and yet transmitted loud and clear.

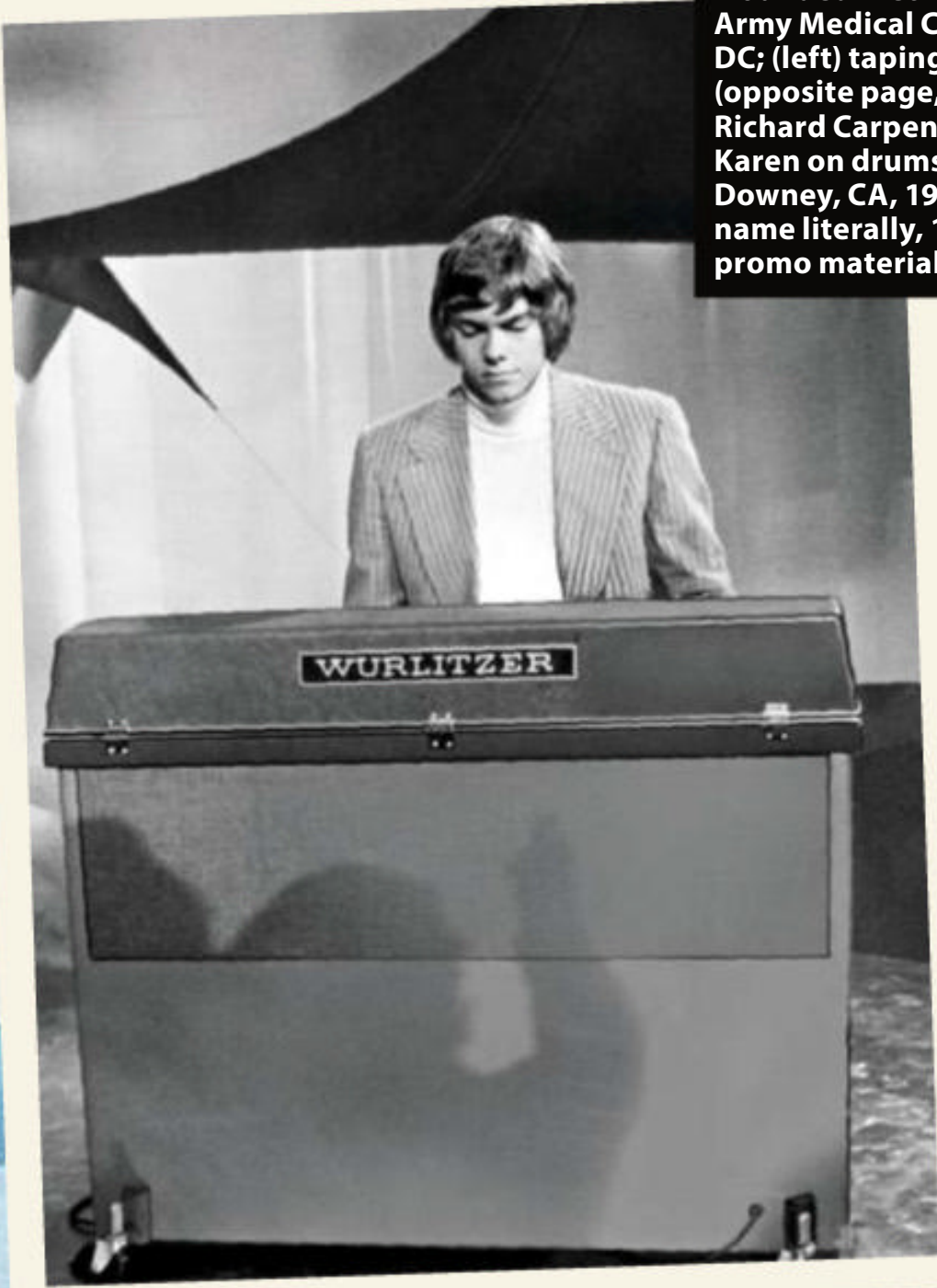
Siblings Richard and Karen were born in 1946 and 1950 respectively, and raised in New Haven, Connecticut, the children of printer Harold and his wife Agnes Carpenter. Richard was a quiet, interior child, fixated on all kinds of pop music. Karen was outdoors, playing sport and being gregarious. Richard taught himself piano by ear and Karen would bring home school friends to join him in the basement and listen to records. Carpenters’ 1973 album, *Now & Then*, the one with a side of oldies linked by a fake ’60s DJ, tapped into memories of hearing the first music designed for teenagers come hurtling or sighing out of the family’s Zenith radio console. Having related so strongly to that sorcery, Richard carried with him at all times a single-minded desire to do the same.

The pictures here are from *Carpenters: The Musical Legacy*, a vibrant and detailed new book about the partnership and their recordings, co-written by Chris May and Mike Cidoni Lennox, who, as they wrapped the project, asked Richard, their subject and collaborator, how he and Karen managed to spend so much time together. “We were almost like





Only just begun: (this page) Richard and Karen sail away, Lake Tahoe, 1970; (above) performing for wounded Vietnam vets, Walter Reed Army Medical Centre, Washington, DC; (left) taping a TV show, 1971; (opposite page, from top) The Richard Carpenter Trio rehearse, Karen on drums, Richard on piano, Downey, CA, 1966; taking their name literally, 1971; Karen ponders, promo material and sleeves.





"KAREN KNEW THAT SHE WAS GREAT. BUT AT THE SAME TIME I'M NOT SURE SHE DID. HIGH EGO AND LOW SELF-ESTEEM."
RICHARD CARPENTER

◀ I was 22. Herb signed us and let us go into the studio and do what we wanted to do, full orchestra, and everything, and didn't complain at all.

You've said that *Offering*, which came out in 1969, had the sound of 1967, because that's when it was written. Close-harmony pop – 5th Dimension, Mama & Papas, Simon & Garfunkel – was big then. Was that in your mind when you were shaping the Carpenters sound or were you going further back?

Yes, to Les Paul & Mary Ford. Obviously some of those other groups had an effect, we were listening to all those records – but, yeah, Mary Ford. Les came up with the wonderful guitar parts, recording at different speeds, overdubbing and all that, but the vocals were all arranged and sung by Mary. There was one hit of theirs, a cover of Tiger Rag, 1951, and in it she sings, backing the guitar, ooh-wah, ooh-wah, in tight four-part harmony, and that had a profound effect on me, that one part of that one record. I was five or six.

Once I learned how it was done, in [early mentor and session bass player] Joe Osborn's garage studio, it was like a duck taking to water. I got it immediately, and so did Karen, and we started stacking vocals on his 4-track. Joe saw the potential, so on his off hours, usually a Sunday, or after midnight – because he was working all hours with Hal Blaine and the rest of them as one of the Wrecking Crew – he helped us make that demo.

That first album cost a lot of money back then, around \$50,000, and when it didn't happen everyone was pressing Herb to let us go and he said, "I think there's something in there, I'll give them one more go." And that was one of his great decisions. Then we did *Close To You* and everything burst wide open. The voicing on the end of *Close To You* is based on Mary Ford's voicings.

After being given a lot of credit for everything we did, Herb said, "I was never their big daddy. They saw the runway and I flagged them in." He's a marvellous fellow.

Did you feel you were getting negative feedback for things that were out of your control?

Of course. This was the time, just after Woodstock, when the subculture became the culture. Not that we were religious, but we were WASPs from the suburbs, as white as Wonderbread, just what the younger writers of the time and the record labels didn't want, and when it exploded it



became "us against them". After two years without a hit – the last was Herb's *This Guy's In Love With You* in 1968 – we were practically A&M's salvation. But with a few exceptions – Herb and Jerry [Moss] mainly – we felt we weren't wanted there. And it hurt.

You had control over the music but less say over the marketing. In the book, you're rather dismissive of the album covers. Why weren't you more involved in those?

Well, we were too busy. But we really were unassuming, as we've been described. We were high ego and low self-esteem. A pair of kids from the suburbs.

When I was a suburban kid, the Carpenters song that really made an impact was *Goodbye To Love*.

[Guitarist] Tony Peluso was a very talented guy. He played with Mark Lindsay when he opened some shows for us and I saw him do a couple of solos. So when I wrote the song and pictured the arrangement I imagined it with the oxymoron of a melodic fuzz guitar solo and asked Tony. He showed up and said, "I don't read music." So I sang and played the melody for him and gave him a chord chart and said, "When you get to *here*, just take it away." And he did. Ninety-nine per cent of that solo was done on the first take.

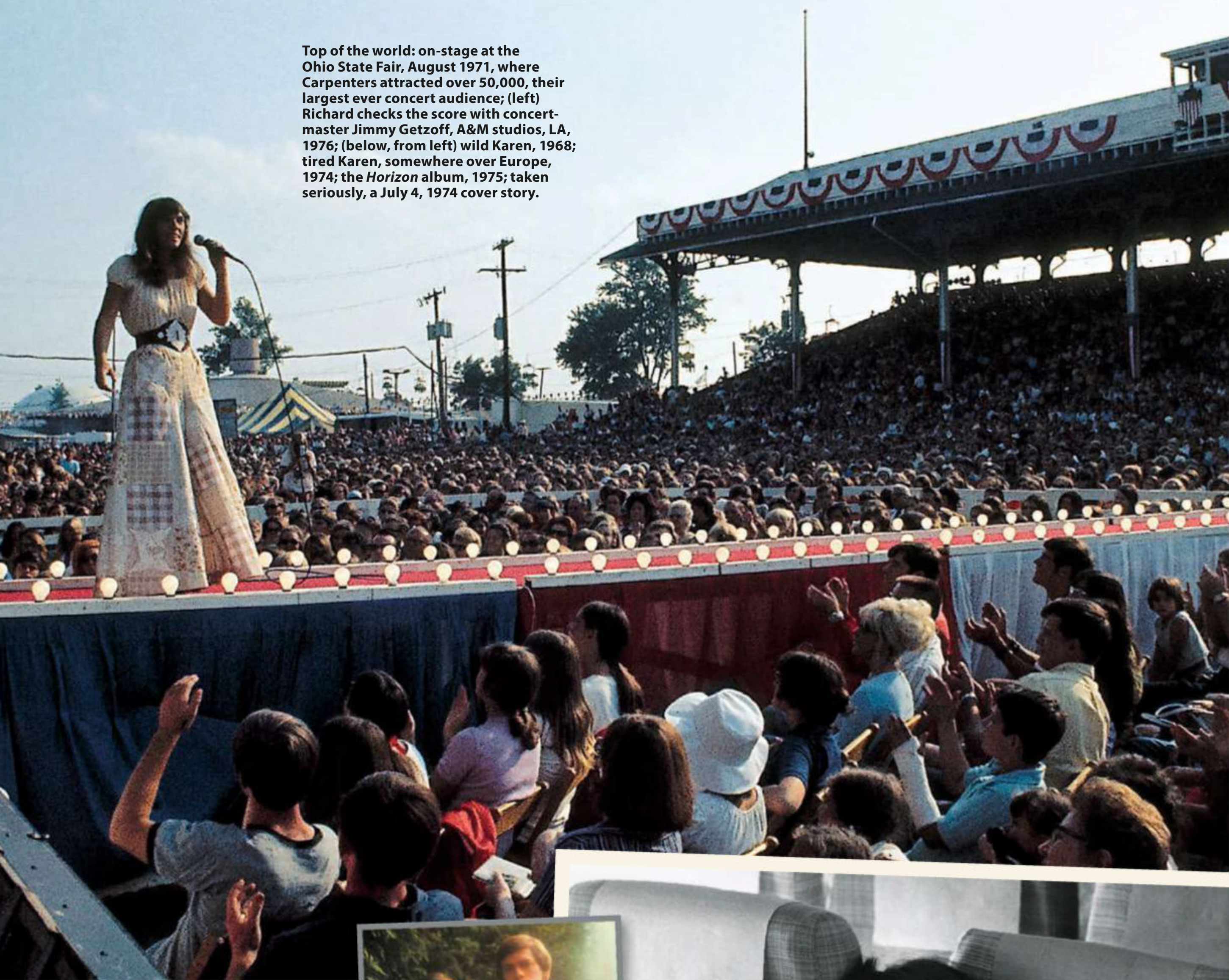
You pulled material from a wide range of sources. From Leon Russell to Hank Williams to Klaatu is quite a distance.

I guess it is. We took it song by song. My dad liked all sorts of music – pop, Dixieland, Western Swing and lots of light classical – and it all appealed to me from a very young age. The arrangement of *Top Of The World* was pure natural country and that was my arrangement, as was *Superstar* and *Goodbye To Love*. My charts are very different from one another.

If there was one thing you could have done differently at the



Top of the world: on-stage at the Ohio State Fair, August 1971, where Carpenters attracted over 50,000, their largest ever concert audience; (left) Richard checks the score with concertmaster Jimmy Getzoff, A&M studios, LA, 1976; (below, from left) wild Karen, 1968; tired Karen, somewhere over Europe, 1974; the *Horizon* album, 1975; taken seriously, a July 4, 1974 cover story.



height of your success what would it have been?

Changed management. We were out on the road too much. We were doing really well if we just made records. We didn't need to tour so much. Early on it was a riot, but it became a lot harder.

Did Karen undervalue her gift? Or did she know that she was great?

She knew that she was great. But at the same time I'm not sure she did. High ego and low self-esteem again. That went for me too. And I think a lot of that had to do with the fact that we were put down all the time by so many people.

She and Streisand passed one time. And Streisand said, "You have a marvellous instrument." And Karen calls me [in disbelief] and I said, "Of course! You do! You shouldn't be surprised." She was able to straighten out her vibrato to do backgrounds, she had remarkable phrasing control. It was incredible how she could take a breath and keep singing. She sounded live like she sounded on the records. And she was brilliant at remembering lyrics.

It must have been a blast to have that voice to write for.

Well, yes. When we did have time off, Herb was always trying to get us to go in the studio without thinking of making a record, just go in and have some fun and try stuff. And I thought, Well, that doesn't make any sense. If I'm in the studio I'm making a record! But now I look back and think, My God, all the great songs we could have written just piano and vocal. That's one of my great sadnesses, that I didn't listen to Herb and just go in and record, for the sake of it.



As a composer you haven't written much since Karen died. Is that because you haven't found a voice you like as much?

Yeah, pretty much. But I've never been one for just sitting down at the piano and seeing if I can come up with something. It's a flaw in me, a laziness, I suppose. I should have written much more. I feel I was born to make pop records and when I lost Karen I lost my friend, my sister and my musical partner.

Your muse too?

Well, I guess so.



Photographs from *Carpenters: The Musical Legacy* by Mike Cidoni Lennox and Chris May, published November 16 by Princeton Architectural Press at £25. Richard Carpenter's *Piano Songbook*, on Decca Records, follows early in the new year.

Outsider, provocateur, chameleon: STURGILL SIMPSON has been confounding – and influencing – Nashville’s music establishment since 2014. And while happier in his heart in 2021, he’s no more eager to compromise. “I don’t give a shit if you can understand what I’m saying,” he tells BILL DeMAIN. “I’m not trying to get on the radio.”

Photography by **ALYSSE GAFKJEN**

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO, NASHVILLE’S Dream Hotel was The Climax Saloon, a whiskey-soaked gambling parlour and bordello in the heart of the red light district. These days, it’s just one more of the city’s upscale boutique hotels. And on a sticky August evening, near its lobby elevators, seven bachelorettes in matching glitter tank tops glance at Sturgill Simpson for a moment, then go back to planning their party weekend. While they surely register his rugged good looks and tattooed Navy vet physique, they don’t recognise him as a Grammy-winning artist or one of the most complex characters in American roots music since Merle Haggard.

“My wife says, ‘You’re such a G-list celebrity,’” Simpson says with a laugh, as we head to his room for our interview. “I do get recognised, but people never seem too sure it’s actually me.”

That uncertainty surely has much to do with Simpson’s skin-shedding evolution. A come-and-go moustache aside, his appearance hasn’t changed much since his 2013 debut *High Top Mountain*. But his sound certainly has, swerving defiantly – and annually – over seven albums from psychedelic country to Stax-style soul, from manga-meets-metal to his current groove, neo-trad bluegrass.

“I think about David Bowie,” says Simpson, a faint accent echoing his eastern Kentucky upbringing. “That’s a guy who killed Ziggy Stardust and a year-and-a-half later was an R&B singer with a new haircut. That’s the stuff that resonates with me.”

He can’t fathom any artist wanting to stick with one sound for years. “Once I’m done with something, I drop it and move on. Even if it disappoints people, I have to do the thing that I’m feeling passionate about *right now*. I’m more afraid of doing something dishonest that’s ultimately just gonna suck.”

The latest stop on his restless charge, *The Ballad Of Dood & Juanita*, is a Civil War-era song cycle of love and revenge. It’s also a nominal tribute to his maternal grandparents and the old westerns he used to watch with his grandpa. “I try to make concept records,” says Simpson. “Or what I’d call cinematic records. This time, I wanted to write a story that flows, with all these different styles of traditional mountain and country and bluegrass music.”

MOUNTAIN MUSIC WAS WHAT SIMPSON heard growing up in the tiny coal-mining burg of Jackson, Kentucky. His other grandfather, “a bluegrass freak and amateur field recorder”, taught him his first chords on guitar, and by the age of nine he was sitting in on local picking parties. In high school, Simpson says all he cared about was “playing guitar and smoking pot”. The latter led to harder drugs, both doing and dealing. “My childhood was very tumultuous,” he says. “After my parents split, I sort of tuned out, and made some really bad decisions. I got in trouble senior year and barely graduated. It was a wake-up call. I knew if I stayed in Jackson, nothing good was going to happen.”

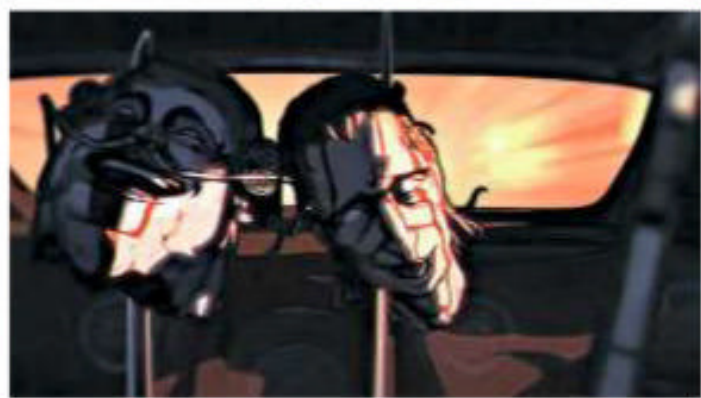
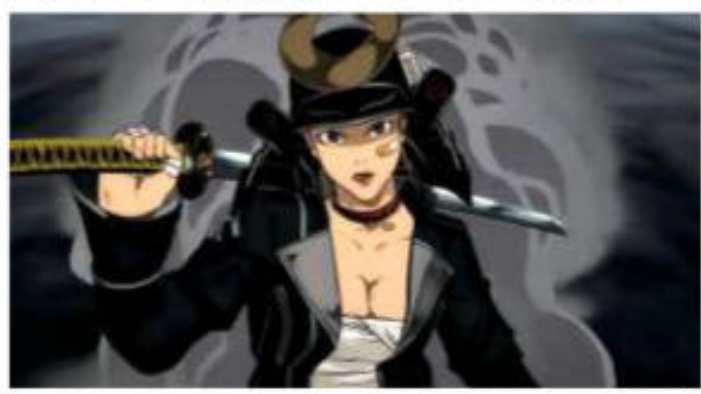
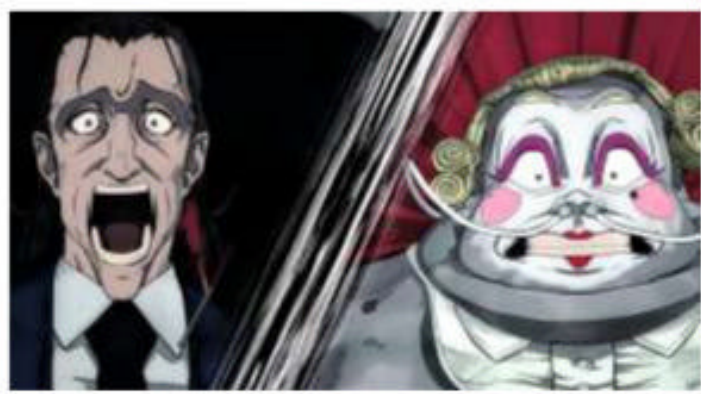
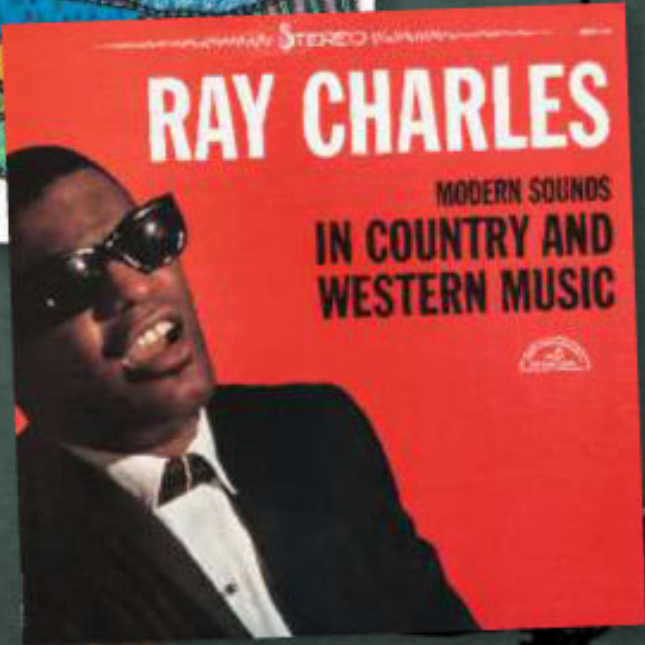
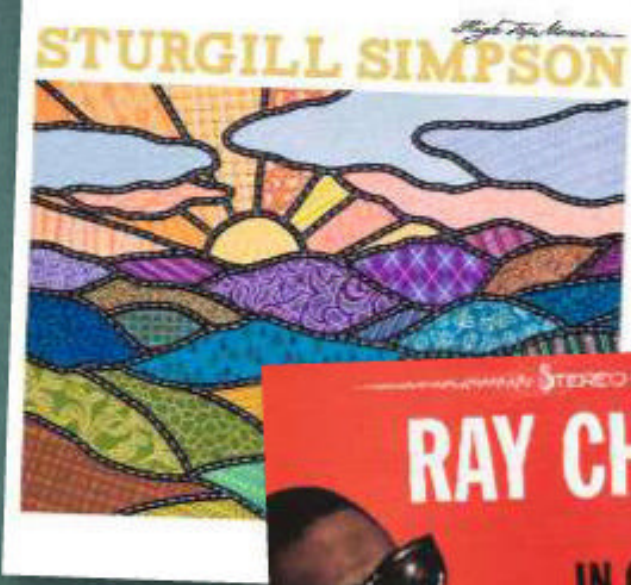
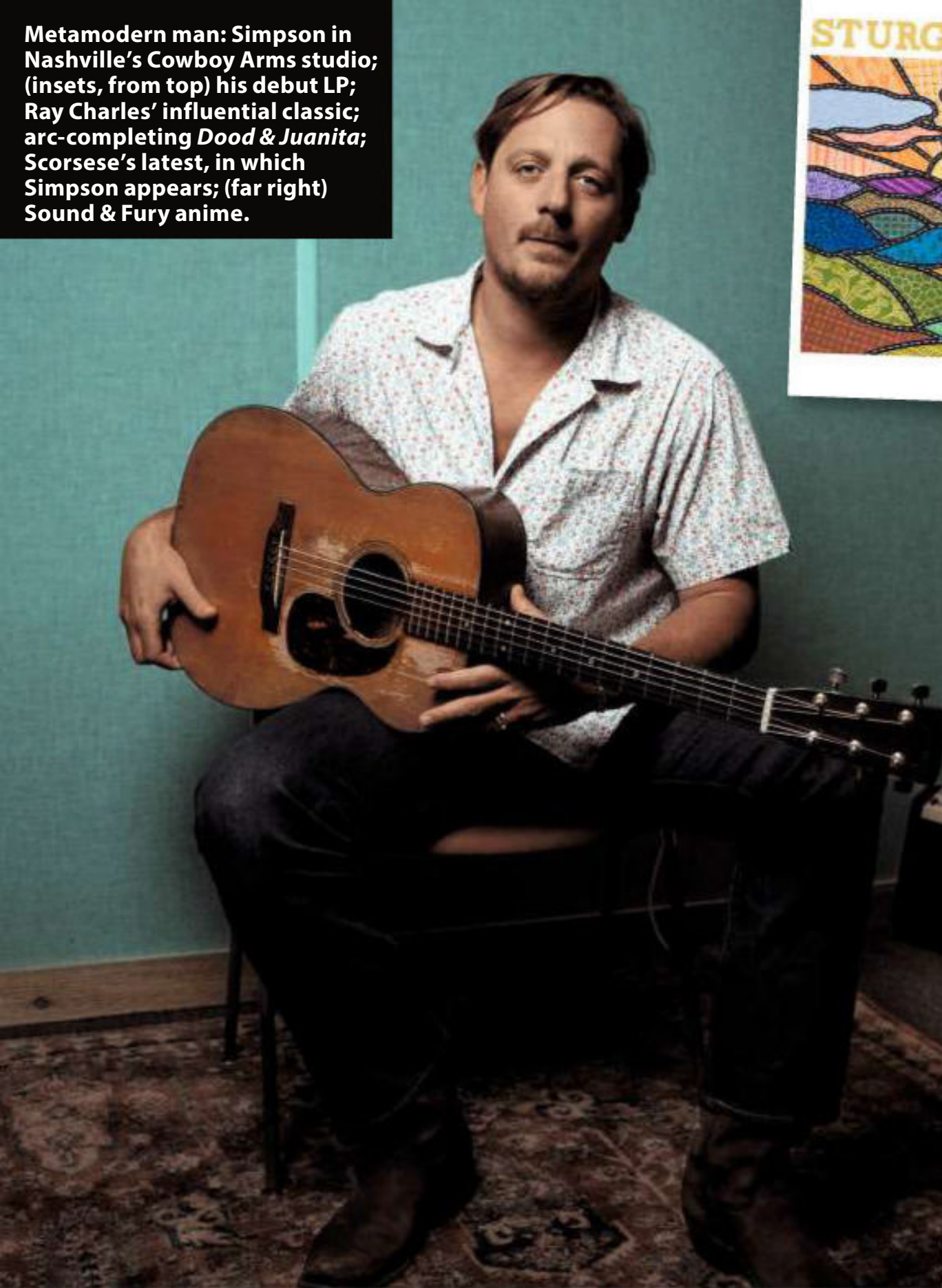
So one day, driving past a military recruiting centre, he enlisted on a whim. “The Navy recruiter was a really hot ➤

Alysse Gafkjen



"My bucket list is pretty checked off": climbing to the top, Sturgill Simpson at the Cowboy Arms studio, Nashville, August 27, 2021.

Metamodern man: Simpson in Nashville's Cowboy Arms studio; (insets, from top) his debut LP; Ray Charles' influential classic; arc-completing *Dood & Juanita*; Scorsese's latest, in which Simpson appears; (far right) *Sound & Fury* anime.



“EVEN IF IT DISAPPOINTS PEOPLE, I HAVE TO DO THE THING THAT I’M FEELING PASSIONATE ABOUT RIGHT NOW.”

Sturgill Simpson

◀ brunette. That’s pretty much what sealed the deal (*laughs*).” Most of his three-year stint at sea was spent in southeast Asia, where he fell in love with futuristic Tokyo: “It was like getting in a spaceship and going to another planet.”

After the Navy, he spent four years as operations manager for Union Pacific Railroad. While all of this may seem a circuitous route to a music career, Simpson disagrees.

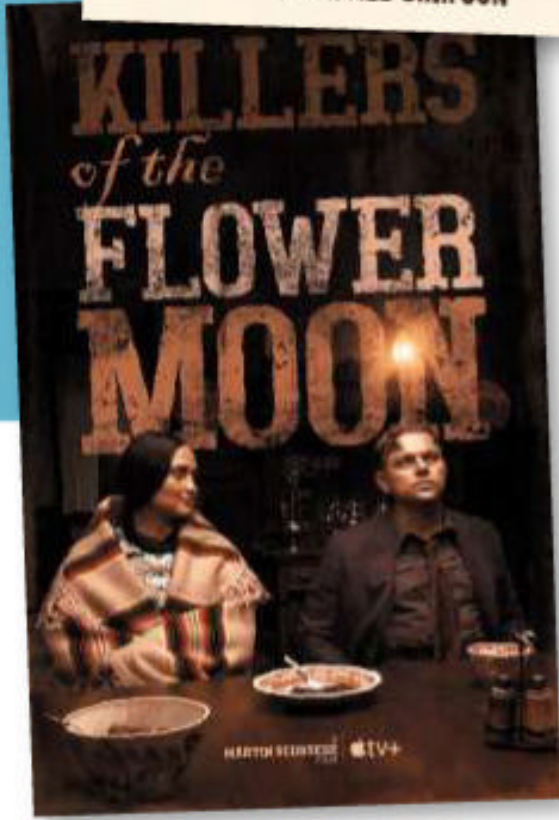
“Those years taught me how to get shit done. Attention to detail, watch the bottom line, find the right crew of guys to do the job.”

Music remained a passionate hobby through it all. Then, in 2010, at his wife’s urging, the couple moved to Nashville. “It took about four years of kicking doors,” he says. “Once the door fell down, I went out and grabbed every opportunity I could.”

Simpson calls his first album “naïve”, a straight country attempt to pander to expectations. “After a year on the road, I realised that’s not what I was really influenced by. I was more of a rock’n’roll kid. So why can’t my records sound more like that? When we made *Metamodern Sounds In Country Music*, it was like, ‘Let’s just break shit!’”

The title, a nod to Ray Charles’ classic *Modern Sounds In Country And Western Music* and a poke at pop-country stars’ questionable cred, was also an apt description of its mash-up of backwoods vibes, psychedelic guitars and trippy lyrics. Simpson says, “The response was empowering in the way it connected. Obviously, people were hungry for that, and still are. Everything I ever do in my life will be forever compared to that record.”

But Simpson took it as licence to experiment further. *A Sailor’s Guide To Earth* revisited his Navy days and drug experimentation via



greasy, brassed-up soul. It won him a Grammy, but not the respect he thought he deserved in Nashville. He says, “After that, maybe I did become a little bitter and immature, a poster boy for bad behaviour in the press. But the question was, ‘Why don’t we have a seat at the table in country music?’”

“We” included friends Jason Isbell and Margo Price — he calls them “my brother and sisterhood” — all part of Nashville’s burgeoning underground. Underlining their alliance, Price’s last album was produced by Simpson. “We were clawing and scratching our way in there at the same time,” she tells MOJO. “It bonded us as outsiders. Even if no one was paying attention, I knew it was special.”

“The industry would never admit this, but the things we are doing are certainly influencing their game,” Simpson adds. “There’s a mass change in consciousness that comes from the music that a lot of people who aren’t on the radar are making.”

In 2017, at the height of his sparring with mainstream country, he famously busked outside the CMA Awards, his Grammy in his guitar case. It wasn’t just a stunt. Two months after the shooting at Las Vegas’s Route 91 Harvest Festival left 61 country fans dead and over 400 injured, the CMA issued a statement saying they wanted their awards show to focus on “celebrating the music.” Further, journalists who broached the topic of gun control with country artists at the event would lose their press credentials. Simpson was shocked at the “audacity and arrogance... I just wanted to throw a middle finger because what happened happened despite and without any assistance from the country music world.”

If there was any love left between the industry and Simpson, the dystopian electro-rock of 2019’s *Sound & Fury* finished it off. A love-it-or-hate-it record (MOJO loved it; Simpson’s label, Warners subsidiary Atlantic/Elektra, didn’t) it was accompanied by a moody 40-minute Japanese anime film that played like Mad Max-meets-



"We're all actors!": (clockwise from left) Simpson shows off his Best Country Album Grammy, 2017; fronting The Hillbilly Avengers on Jimmy Kimmel Live, December 2020; with Margo Price at Nashville's Ryman Auditorium, May 23, 2018; Up Close And Personal with John Prine at the Grammy Museum, LA, June 21, 2016.

Pulling Up ROOTS

Fucking with the template, the Sturgill Simpson way, by John Mulvey.

METAMODERN SOUNDS IN COUNTRY MUSIC

★★★★

(Loose, 2014)

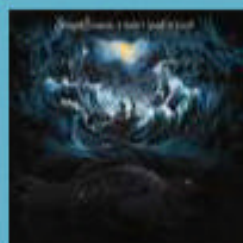


"Marijuana, LSD, Psilocybin, and DMT/They all changed the way I see," admits Simpson on his second solo album, framing himself as a psychedelic Merle Haggard. But beyond a little acid rock trim (the Beatlesy reverse guitars on *It Ain't All Flowers*), *Metamodern* showcases a questing, open-minded craftsman, with classical songwriting chops that could transcend their settings.

A SAILOR'S GUIDE TO EARTH

★★★★

(Atlantic, 2016)



Intended as an instruction manual to his firstborn son, *A Sailor's Guide* marries intimate wisdom with a radically expanded sound; the Dap-Kings horns, most notably, add a Stax kick. A take on Nirvana's *In Bloom* is bold, but it's the Simpson originals you'll come back to, where muscular country-funk never obscures the poignancy.

SOUND & FURY

★★★★

(Elektra, 2019)



The premise reads like a provocation to country traditionalists: a heavy rock/electroboogie soundtrack to a Netflix anime. But Simpson's absurd ambition pays off yet again, supercharging his fine songs so they code like a 21st century upgrade on ZZ Top's *Eliminator*. Frantic disco highlight *A Good Look* is, amazingly, co-written by John Prine.

CUTTIN' GRASS VOLS. 1 & 2

★★★★

(Thirty Tigers, 2020)



How to confound expectations next? By pivoting to orthodoxy, as Simpson assembles the Hillbilly Avengers and recasts 32 of his old tunes as joyful, filigreed bluegrass. Great songs like *Welcome To Earth* (Pollywog) emerge even stronger; *Vol. 2*, heavy on *Sailor's Guide* revamps, might be his best album to date.



Simpson's singing voice was already a thing of wonder: a distinctive well-deep growl that gnaws and tears at his lyrics. "It's like cussing," he says. "The *sound* is what you're making people feel. A lot of my faults as a singer, as most people here in Nashville would say, is that I don't enunciate consonants. It's because I listened to so much early mountain music, where it wasn't so much about the clarity of what you're saying, but the expression in your voice when you say it. I don't really give a shit if you can understand what I'm saying. I'm not trying to get on the radio."

But a voice, even one as oaken as Simpson's, is a delicate thing. Weeks after meeting MOJO, five dates into September's Outlaw Music Festival Tour with Willie Nelson and others, he was forced to bail with what he initially hoped was laryngitis but turned out to be ruptured vocal cords. Addressing fans, his tone veered between doom-laden and darkly humoured: "On the bright side, now I can finally really focus on other pursuits and areas of passionate interest... like becoming the best hit-man I can be."

If anyone has the sheer bloody-mindedness to push through this crisis and come up swinging, it's Sturgill Simpson. The show must go on, after all.

"We're all actors," he told me. "Anybody tells you that they're not, it's bullshit. We're just trying to reach people anyway you can and hope they listen to the stuff that's real. That's what I believe."



Cowboy Bebop. In its wake, Simpson and label parted ways. "Quite honestly, I think it's a fucking great rock record," insists Simpson today. "A lot of people don't, but that's because they're wrong (*laughs*). That was a time in my life when it was very hard to have fun. But man, that record was fun!"

BEING FREE OF WHAT SIMPSON calls "the trappings" has improved his life. "All that stuff about having a seat at the table — it has nothing to do with me. It just distracts from the music. Once I realised that, I got a lot happier within the confines of my own heart. I don't know what I ever expected living in Nashville in terms of success but I've exceeded it. My bucket list is pretty checked off."

Other ticked boxes include an acting gig in Martin Scorsese's upcoming *Killers Of The Flower Moon*. "He's incredibly passionate, jumping around like a 12-year-old kid," Simpson says of the director. "And it inspired me observing how prepared he was for the environment to be controlled, but in the moment, things to be as free as possible."

Simpson feels that same sense of freedom with his band, The Hillbilly Avengers: a "group of wizards" featuring fiddler Stuart Duncan and guitarist Tim O'Brien, who also backed him on 2020's bluegrass retooling of his catalogue, *Cuttin' Grass Vols. 1 & 2*. "Feeling that kind of groove and power behind me, I knew it would make me rise up and sing better."

THE SOUND AND THE FURY

**IDLES' HARDCORE ANTHEMS
HAVE TAKEN UP CUDGELS
AGAINST LITTLE ENGLANDISM
AND TOXIC MASCULINITY. BUT
WITH NEW ALBUM, *CRAWLER*,
THEY'RE HITTING CLOSER TO
HOME, CONFRONTING SINGER
JOE TALBOT'S STRUGGLES WITH
ADDICTION. MEANWHILE, THEIR
MUSIC REACHES BEYOND, INTO
REALMS OF SOUL, NOISE AND...
"POWERVERIOLENCE"? "WE HAVE
TO MOVE FORWARD," THEY
TELL **VICTORIA SEGAL**.
PORTRAIT BY **CIARAN FREDERICK**.**

JOE TALBOT IS UNWELL. SOMEWHAT UNNERVINGLY, HE MENTIONS this only after a very 2019 handshake, explaining that his return to live performance has been marred by a raging bout of Norovirus. While the Idles singer is now on the mend, sipping water in a hotel bar in Kingston-On-Thames, it was a shakier story a couple of nights ago when the band played two hometown shows at Bristol's 140-capacity Louisiana. "We haven't played in a room that size for a long time, so post-Covid or not it was a bit alien," Talbot admits. "But I was so super-ill I just felt vulnerable — like, I shouldn't be up here. I want to be in bed. Or on the toilet. It was rank."

Time off, though, is not an option for Idles right now. First, the band — completed by drummer Jon Beavis, bassist Adam 'Dev' Devonshire and guitarists Mark Bowen and Lee Kiernan — are catching up with long-delayed promo shows for last October's third album, *Ultra Mono*, road-testing its king-sized songs in their natural sweaty element. Then, the morning after tonight's outing at Kingston's Club Pryzm, the debilitated Talbot is cycling to Bristol to raise money for that city's youth mental health charity Empire Fighting Chance Gym, a 130-mile slog he predicts will take around 11 hours. ("It was hell," he reports later. "I just love cycling and it was with my mates so it was a beautiful thing really, but I won't be doing that again.")

Demanding most attention, however, is Idles' fourth album, *Crawler*, a record hatched from the past year's enforced period of reflection, taking form during three-hour morning walks, time with family (both Talbot and Bowen are fathers of two-year-olds) and, says Talbot, "lots of therapy and lots of sober days".

Burning wheel:
Idles' Joe Talbot,
on-stage at Club
Pryzm, Kingston-
On-Thames,
August 26, 2021

➤ Ciaran Frederick





◀ Idles' previous albums – 2017's debut *Brutalism*, 2018's *Joy As An Act Of Resistance* and *Ultra Mono* – were outbreaks of a colourful new strain of post-hardcore punk, although the band habitually bridle at the latter label. "I'd say we were rock'n'roll band," says Talbot. "The Sex Pistols were a rock'n'roll band. If I was going to be specific I'd say we were a noise-influenced garage-rock band."

Nick Launay, who co-produced *Ultra Mono* and partly mixed *Joy As An Act Of Resistance*, sees similarities with some of the classic bands he's worked with: Killing Joke, Gang Of Four, Nick Cave.

"There's absolutely no fucking around at all," he says. I've worked with quite a lot of people like that: Lou Reed is the same, John Lydon is the same – it's almost like they are taking what most people would take an hour to do and doing it in three minutes. But the intensity that might exist for a whole hour is also being focused into three minutes so those three minutes are as intense as fuck."

FULL OF ABSURDIST SATIRE, COMMUNAL CHANTS and gallows humour, Idles' first three albums included energetic responses to the prejudices and delusions the group saw crystallised in Brexit-era Britain, but they also dragged masculinity and mental health into the spotlight. Samaritans, from *Joy As An Act Of Resistance*, subverted its manly repressions ("chin up, pipe down") with a Katy Perry lift ("I kissed a boy and I liked it"). *Brutalism* was heavily influenced by the death of Talbot's mother during its recording; he cared for her from the time he was 16, when she suffered a stroke. On *Joy*, June bravely documented the loss of Talbot and his partner's first daughter at birth.

Crawler is more introspective still, Talbot's reckoning with himself after years of trauma and addiction. The desolate MTT 420 RR is based on the singer's brush with a speeding motorcyclist; Car Crash flashes forensic images of a near-death experience: "raw flesh on the bottom of the footwell floor."

Talbot, who grew up listening to soul music, decided he wanted to sing more – so he does, most notably on the "waltz Motown" of The Beachland Ballroom. Other influences on its sound included Phil Spector, avant-garde composer/soundtrack artist The Haxan Cloak and Portishead's *Third* ("I can't think of a darker album," says Bowen). Yet for the singer, there's still joy and redemption implicit in every track.

"I made sure I went through catharsis as a solo thing for me to reflect on my drug addiction and my recovery so that people could listen to this album and feel a sense of elation," he says. "Feel that maybe if some cunt like Joe can recover, I can too."

The most explicit traces of that addiction come on the brief, explosive Wizz, a track inspired by the extreme metal microgenre powerviolence – "cocaine music" says Talbot – which they were introduced to by their sound engineer Chris Fullard, who also works with Boris and SunnO))). "There's this one Japanese band and one of their songs is just

them bulldozing a venue," Talbot says admiringly. The lyrics, meanwhile, are text messages from Talbot's former drug dealer: "Peruvian flake/Hmm pink champagne."

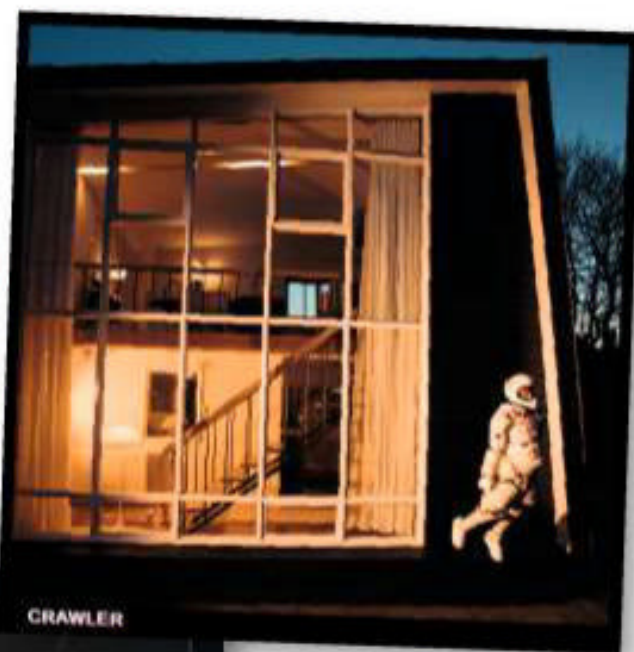
"Field lyrics!" laughs Talbot. "From my old addiction days. I thought that was a beautiful thing."

A Beautiful Thing was the title of their 2019 live album, too, and it's a very Idles trait, this finding beauty in places where it's not immediately apparent.

"I'm fascinated by the dichotomy of where I was then," says Talbot. "I was a real piece of shit, I was a really horrible person to myself and other people. But I also had a great time. I wasn't like nasty to people, I was just like an addict and just did what addicts do, which is lie and let people down a lot."

How long was this period he's talking about?

"Eighteen years. On and off. Addiction's cycle. It wasn't like that all the time. That's why you keep friends, because when you're up, great; when you're down you're a fucking knobhead. I'm just fascinated by how I've managed to keep myself alive and out of prison."



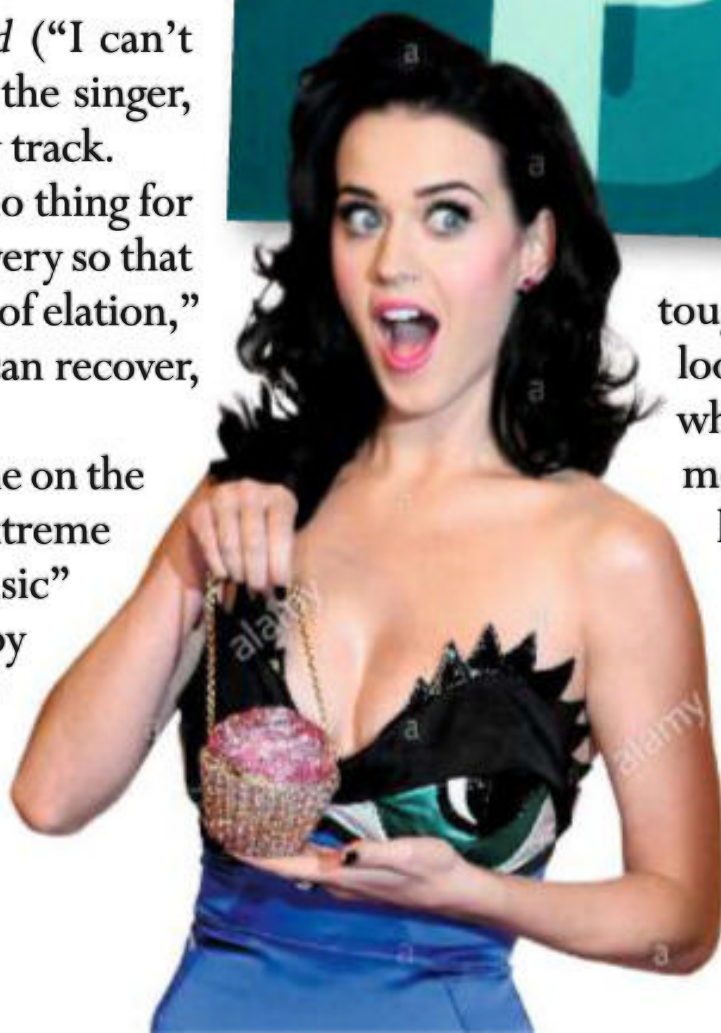
being tossed around while playing their instruments." (In a fittingly surreal indication of their reach, Yow was hipped to Idles by David Lynch's assistant, Michael Barile.)

At Club Pryzm, the danger is manifesting in a slightly different way as Talbot regales an ecstatic crowd with his recent health miseries: "Today is the first day I've eaten a full meal! Today is the first day I'm shitting solids!" Yet Idles are contagious in the best ways, too; community isn't just something they spell out in multicultural anthem Danny Nedelko ("My blood brother is an immigrant/A beautiful immigrant"). Bassist Devonshire works on the merchandise table until the show begins, posing for pictures with delighted fans.

Launay describes Talbot as "a very tough geezer. He's loud and he's in your face and he looks intimidating but he's such a sweetheart. I loved it when he dyed his hair pink. It was like: 'He might hurt me – but he won't hurt me much.' They're a very huggy band."

That's never more apparent than when Talbot has a children-are-the-future moment, hoisting Arlo Lippiatt, the 11-year-old creator of Bristol fanzine *Pint-Sized Punk*, up in the air on-stage.

"I'd met them all at gigs at the Louisiana ➤





When the light comes on: Idles (from left) Lee Kiernan, Jon Beavis, Adam Devonshire, Mark Bowen, Joe Talbot; (above) frontline dispatches at Club Pryzm (from left) Bowen; Beavis; Kiernan; Devonshire; Talbot; Pint-Sized Punk 'zine editor Arlo Lippiatt owns it; (insets) new LP *Crawler*; Haxan Cloak; Portishead; Katy Perry.



"I WAS A REAL PIECE OF SHIT, I WAS A REALLY HORRIBLE PERSON TO MYSELF AND OTHER PEOPLE. BUT I ALSO HAD A GREAT TIME." JOE TALBOT

“WE’VE DONE THE BIGGEST, LOUDEST, MOST BRASH BIG ROCK ALBUM VERSION OF OURSELVES WE CAN AND WE WON’T GO BACK THERE.” JOE TALBOT



Addicted to love: (from left) Beavis, Talbot, Kiernan, Bowen, Devonshire; (opposite, clockwise from top) Jesus Lizard’s David Yow, 1993; Mark Bowen at Glastonbury, 2019; Joe Talbot in the pink; producer Nick Launay.



◀ earlier in the week and when Joe was sick I soundchecked with them when he couldn’t make it,” Lippiatt tells MOJO. “Joe brought me up on the stage and then he told me to ‘Ride the crowd like I effing owned them.’ So I did.” Teach them well and let them lead the way.

“That’s one of the coolest things about them,” says David Yow. “They sound so aggressive but it’s all like peace, love and understanding.”

THERE IS, HOWEVER, ALSO A DEFENSIVENESS TO Idles, a sense they feel themselves in permanent opposition. Before the show, Talbot and Bowen sit smartly across a shiny hotel table from MOJO. The soft-spoken guitarist (a qualified dentist who co-produced *Crawler* with American hip-hop producer Kenny Beats) is famed for performing in his underwear – or maybe stars-and-stripes spandex tights – yet today, he is suave in a navy-blue suit with orange accents. That the outfit will stay on at stage time might be the most obvious pointer to their new, more sober attitude.

Talbot, meanwhile, is more obviously alert to possible insult, seeming to scroll ahead in the conversation for potential mockery or misinterpretation. Discussing post-Covid audiences, he uses the words “boisterous” and “rambunctious” and immediately picks himself up. “Joe said “rambunctious” in a cunty accent,” he jeers. “He immediately sounded like a prick.” Bowen laughs fondly.

It’s an understandable position: Sleaford Mods and Fat White Family – outwardly groups who share similar perspectives on street-level Britain – have both accused Idles of inauthenticity and class tourism, while *Ultra Mono*’s broader brushstrokes, such as

Little England metaphor Model Village (“just give them an anthem and they’ll sing it”), looked to some like that “metropolitan elite” kicking down. Talbot is unabashed.

“I’m not having a go at villages,” he says. “I’m having a go at English people who are desperately trying to seek the fucking empire that died a long time ago through fucking xenophobia and racism. They were just like, ‘Well, I live in a village – does that mean I’m a prick?’ No.”

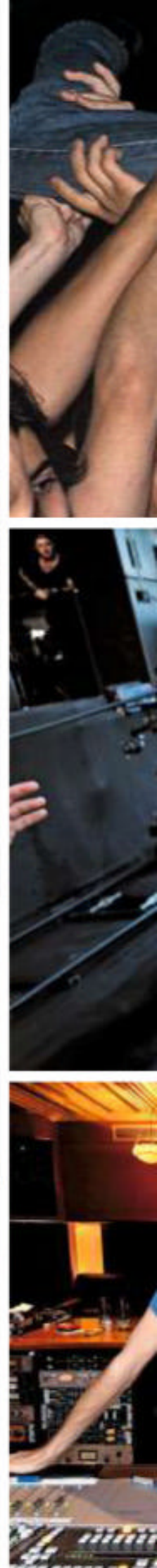
His eyes glint conspiratorially at Bowen.

“But also I grew up in Devon so I deserve to be able to say get fucked because I’m telling you now it’s a shithole.” He rocks back on his chair with a sorry-not-sorry grin.

Ultra Mono, they feel, suffered by not being out in the wild. “I think the album translated badly as a home-listening device,” says Talbot. “The whole point of that record was to build a new narrative with our audience. The album itself was a caricature of what people thought of us and we wanted to kind of twist that up and then burn that effigy so we could start *Crawler*.”

“We can’t make another *Joy*, we can’t make another *Ultra Mono*,” he continues. “We just can’t go back. Because we’ve done it. To death. We’ve done the biggest loudest most brash big rock album version of ourselves we can and we won’t go back there. We have to move forward.”

MOVING FORWARD – AND HOW TO ACHIEVE THAT – is at the heart of *Crawler*. “The weekend lasted 20 years,” Talbot sang on Colossus, from *Joy As An Act Of Resistance*, but it wasn’t just a good Mark E Smith-style line. *Crawler*’s When The Lights Come On was inspired by an older man Talbot once met hanging round with his friends; he couldn’t understand what his angle was until years later. “I was DJing at a hip-hop night for seven





years and by the end I was like the oldest in the room by... a lot."

After one of his nights, he went to a house party where "they were all doing M-Cat. I was like, 'What am I doing here?' I am That Guy. And I left. Fuck this. But addiction will do that. You'll excuse yourself into any sort of social pocket if it allows you to get wasted on drugs. The younger the groups, the easier it is to get away with drinking five nights a week."

On *The Wheel*, one of *Crawler*'s most abrasive songs and a reflection on alcoholism and its genetic legacy, the isolation and desperation is tangible. "Can I get a hallelujah?" shouts Talbot with increasing urgency, but nobody shouts back.

Talbot was 12 years old when his mother had a heart attack on Easter Sunday. "I came downstairs to do my Easter Egg hunt and no-one was home," he says. "They'd just taken my mum to hospital and not told me. I didn't know what had happened. So I came down and just waited for like, four hours. I was thinking the other day, 'How do you get that bad? That fucked to have a heart attack?' I was like, 'Fuck, I am not going to be that person. I'm not going to have a heart attack. No chance.'" He looks at Bowen with a sudden smile. "Not unless I do a speedball at a really good party or something."

They both laugh.

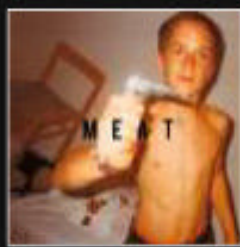
PROFITS OF RAGE

IDLES SO FAR, ON RECORD,
BY VICTORIA SEGAL.

MEAT EP

★★★★

(Balley, 2015)



After the dour interpolations of 2012 debut EP *Welcome* and a long period of recalibration, here Idles sounded like a band locking into a voice of their own, the call-and-response of the Monks-inspired *The Idles Chant* and the while-Rome-burns violence of *Queens* putting the flesh on their post-punk bones.

BRUTALISM

★★★★★

(Partisan/Balley, 2017)



A concrete monument to grief – Talbot's mother died during recording – *Brutalism* sometimes echoes the blasted mood of PiL's similarly bereft

Death Disco. Anger is also an energy, especially on *Well Done*'s dark sardonic class analysis ("Mary Berry's got a job/So why don't you get a job?"), Exeter's male-pattern punch-up and the Tory-scaring *Mother*.

JOY AS AN ACT OF RESISTANCE

★★★★★

(Partisan, 2018)



Triggered by "seeing a country fall apart", their second album sharply amplified Idles' key concerns. *Colossus* and *Samaritans* mined

masculinity and mental health; the roiling *Oil* of the pro-immigration Danny Nedelko and *I'm Scum*'s Firestarter rhymes handled politics; while *June*, about the stillbirth of Talbot's first daughter, showed rare courage and emotional honesty.

A BEAUTIFUL THING: IDLES LIVE AT LE BATACLAN

★★★★

(Partisan, 2019)



"We built this album, and we built this tour, on love and compassion," Talbot tells the Parisian audience, caught for ragged posterity on the last night

of the *Joy As An Act Of Resistance* tour. "Let's fucking go!" Contains fierce versions of *Gram Rock* and *Divide & Conquer* – not to mention a band in their element.

ULTRA MONO

★★★★★

(Partisan, 2020)



Even with guests Jehnny Beth, Warren Ellis, David Yow and – who else? – Jamie Cullum on board, Idles tripled down on their essential Idles-ness here.

Brexit metaphor *Model Village* raised hackles ("there's a lot of gammon in the village") but *Grounds* and *Mr Motivator* (namecheck for Kathleen Hanna) are a blistering super-concentrate of all their strengths.

"Not in some fucking suburban area of Devon doing an egg hunt for your son. That's just tragic, isn't it? At least have a party." He stops. "No, I'm joking, but I did think about that, the differences. You either use it as a barometer of do's and don'ts or you just use it as an excuse to be a fucking alcoholic. You've got to hold yourself accountable in these things. I'm the one drinking. It's not my mum. I should have learned."

Talbot says he was long aware he was an addict. "I was vocal about it: 'Yeah, I'm fucked, I know I should sort my life out.' I'd tell partners, 'I know I need to go to therapy.' But it wasn't acknowledging that I was an addict that was the issue – it was pulling my finger out of my arse and going to therapy and sobering up."

The breakthrough came at a Taiwanese restaurant in New York in October 2019. "I'd been sober all week. I had a mental spiralling breakdown in San Francisco which was one of maybe two I'd have in a year. Two's a lot considering how bad they are."

Their "tour guy" sat next to him, as drunk as Talbot was sober. "He turned to me and said, 'You know you're better when you're sober?' And I was like, 'Yeah, I know.' And he was like, 'I don't mean shows. I mean everything. You're just not good when you drink. Even after one beer, you're not as good a person.'" Talbot's voice gets very quiet. "So I stopped. It just took one drunk guy to say it right and I was like, 'Yeah.'"

Talbot describes himself as "just one of those people who shouldn't drink. My mum's the same. She shouldn't have drunk, she'd be alive now."

She was, he says, an amazing mother. "But she didn't stop. But I have. Because I'm better than that. Not better good or bad, just, I've got more knowledge than she has. I've seen the person I love die. I know what it's like and I don't want Frida [his daughter] to go through what I've been through. I don't want anyone to go through what I've been through."

FOR IDLES, THIS FEELS LIKE A moment full of possibility, a time to explore what they can do, what they want to be.

"We've now got to the point where we're really, really comfortable with our sense of identity," says Bowen. "Once you're sure of that identity you can explore the boundary of it. We've both got two-year-olds and they're exploring their ego boundaries and it's a bit like that. Being a two-year-old looks really fun and that's what we're getting from this."

Crawler, admits Talbot, might test their audience as much it tested them, might push some fans away. But it was an album that had to be made.

"It's a story about the worst years of my life but also the best, the most brilliant," Talbot says. "If you don't like hearing tales of struggle then you won't like it. But it makes me feel happy because I'm here. I'm alive." **M**

Too Ma

Two genius frenemies, a disappearing bassist, a drummer who sang like Wilson Pickett, plus the sunny “voice of sanity”: **BUFFALO SPRINGFIELD** were the band of all the talents, sired by serendipity. But once the busts, bust-ups, seizures and stymied ambitions took their toll, their fate was sealed. “I think we knew it was coming,” they tell **SYLVIE SIMMONS**.

Photograph by
HENRY DILTZ.

Expecting to fly: Buffalo Springfield outside The Third Eye, Redondo Beach, CA, October 7, 1966 (from left) Richie Furay, Dewey Martin, Bruce Palmer, Stephen Stills and Neil Young.

my Kooks



*Used to play in a rock'n'roll band,
But they broke up
We were young and we were wild
It ate us up.*

Neil Young, Buffalo Springfield Again

“YOU KNOW WHAT THEY SAY about journalists,” Stephen Stills is telling MOJO. “If the myth is more interesting than the truth, print the myth.” But what about a band where the truth outweighs the myth? A band whose truth is a litany of hearses, jail cells, battles, seizures, defections and deportations, go-go girls dancing in cages and cops busting heads on Sunset Strip? A mightily influential band that existed for just 19 months, destroyed by what made it great?

The Buffalo Springfield, says Neil Young, “was a great band. We were really discovering a lot of new things and experimenting, and the music that we

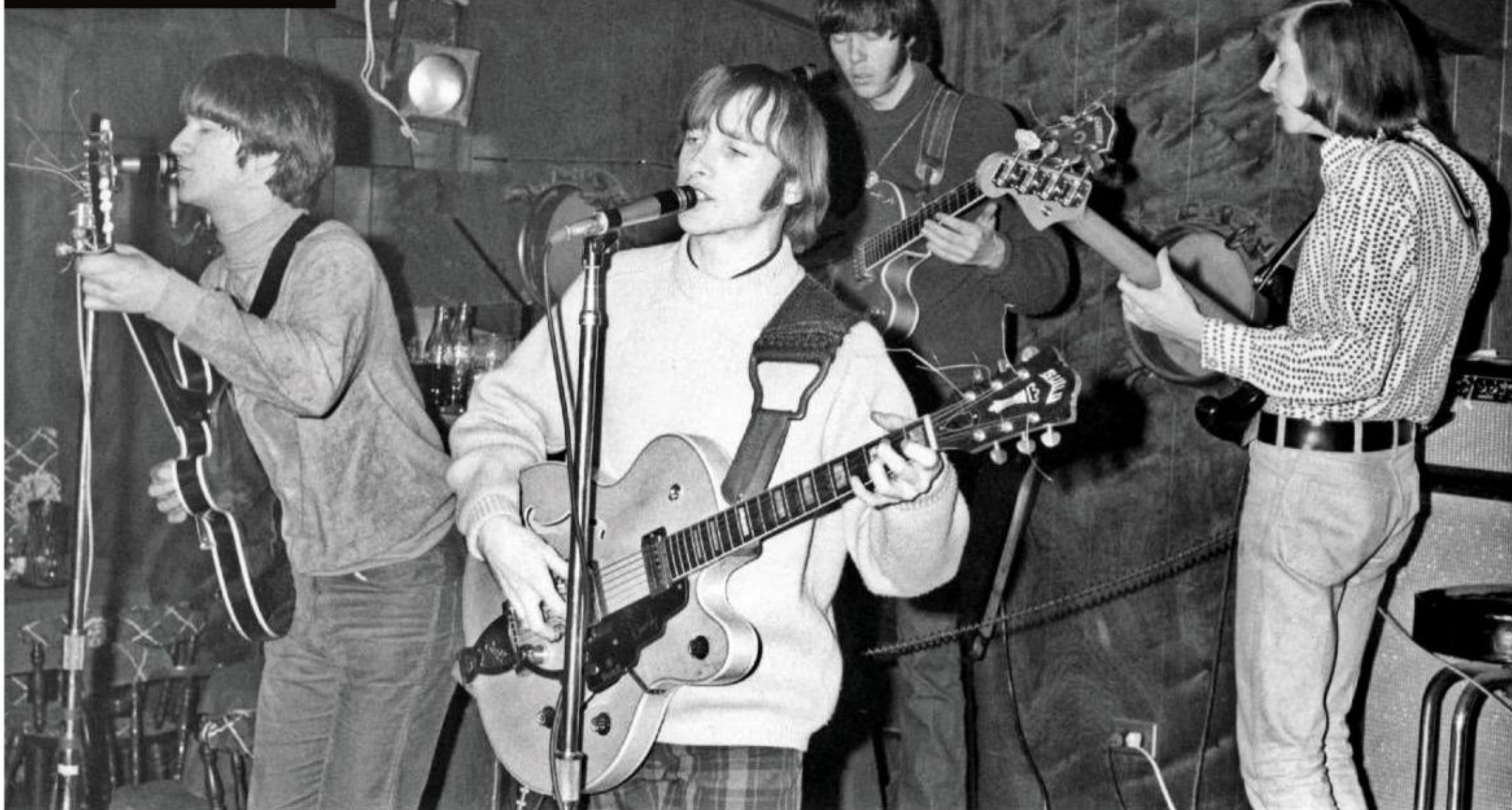
played in that band together was really good music.”

Says Stills, “Neil and I get to a place that’s really quite extraordinary. Sometimes it’s other-worldly, but there’s going to be crashes.”

LOS ANGELES, MARCH 1966. THERE’S a 1953 Pontiac hearse with Canadian plates rolling down Sunset Boulevard, its back windows discreetly curtained for skinning up and hiding instruments. Behind the wheel: Neil Young, 20 years old. Beside him, Bruce Palmer, the 19-year-old bass player with The Mynah Birds — the Toronto band Young played lead guitar for until the US Navy showed up to arrest their American frontman, Rick James, for deserting a ship bound for Vietnam. Back then there were lots of old cars crossing the Canadian border with young Americans escaping the draft. Young though — as he would often do — took the opposite direction. He was on “a mission from God,” he said; more specifically he was looking for Stephen Stills, ➤

Henry Diltz

Good time boys: the Springfield during the first show of their 10-night residency at Ondine, 308 East 59th St, New York, December 31, 1966, (from left) Furay, Stills, Young, Palmer.



◀ for the purpose of forming a band. The two met in Toronto on the folk circuit — Young was in The Squires, Stills was in The Company — and they talked about doing something together. Young had looked for him in New York, in vain. Then they spent a week or so looking for him in the nightclubs of Los Angeles, sleeping in the coffin section of the hearse and giving tourists rides to make some cash. That day they were heading to the 405 Freeway to see if Stills was up in San Francisco, where his mother had a house.

Stuck in a traffic jam, they see a van coming towards them, its occupants gesticulating at them to pull over: Stephen Stills and Richie Furay. The hearse follows the van to Stills's music business friend Frazier Mohawk's house, where they take out their guitars and start playing, and a band is as near as dammit born. They get a *de facto* manager — Mohawk — and a name from the plaque on a steamroller outside that reads "Buffalo, Springfield Roller Co".

Stills, overjoyed at Young's appearance, was initially circumspect about his arriving with a bass player. Being a multi-instrumentalist made Stills fussy, but he was quick to appreciate Palmer. "He's the best bass player I ever heard", Stills says today, "along with [Motown bassist] James Jamerson and McCartney."

Stills was fussier still about drummers, "because I'm a drummer first of all; the first thing I played. I searched high and low for a drummer that fit the bill. But at the time drummers were stylistically prone to jamming and playing jazz and softer and stuff and, being from the South" — born in Texas and raised in Florida by a military family — "I wanted some thump."

Chris Hillman and David Crosby of The Byrds suggested Dewey Martin. An ex-pat Canadian a handful of years older than the rest, he'd drummed with Carl Perkins, Patsy Cline and Roy Orbison. He'd just lost his job with bluegrass band The Dillards after they abandoned their attempt to go electric. Indignant at having to audition for these youngsters, Martin said he'd only take the job if they let him sing. He sang like Wilson Pickett, he said.

IT'S EXTRAORDINARY HOW QUICKLY BUFFALO Springfield gelled. "It just seemed to fall into place," says Stills, adding that most of the groundwork of his "carefully-devised plan" had already been laid. He'd managed to lure Furay 3,000 miles to LA from New York — where they'd both been in folk group the Au Go Go Singers — to join him in a band that only existed

in his head. But the "maturity and musicianship" of the songs Stills was writing for his band-to-be, Furay says, made him stick around. At Stills' tiny apartment on Fountain Blvd, the pair worked on Stills's songs and also one of Young's — Nowadays Clancy Can't Even Sing — that Young had taught Furay when they met in New York.

Within days the Springfield were playing live. Two days after their official debut at the Troubadour on April 11 they were opening for The Byrds. Young recalls their show at the Orange County Showgrounds, San Bernardino. "We were on a Cavalcade of Stars kind of bill, four or five bands, which was really cool, because you had this condensed amount of time to work in — like a record was 40 minutes max for an LP, and 45 minutes for a show — and you could really focus on the best of what you were doing."

The Springfield were a folk rock band, emphasis on the rock but with elements of country and soul. There was something Beatlesque in the way they sang together, while the interplay of three guitarists and a rhythm section with elements of Motown and Stax gave them a distinctive sound. The band boasted three singer-songwriters, but the roles allotted had Stills and Young as lead songwriters, Furay and Stills lead vocalists, and Young lead guitar player — which Stills sometimes seemed to forget. Martin got to sing too, but it took a while to decide what to do with Young's unusual voice.

Having the endorsement of LA folk rock aristocracy The Byrds certainly didn't hurt. Hillman was so taken with the Springfield he discussed managing them with Roger McGuinn. He also helped them get a residency at the Whisky A Go-Go, the hottest club in town. For six weeks the band played five short sets a night, sharing the bill with bands like Them, Love and, frequently, The Doors.

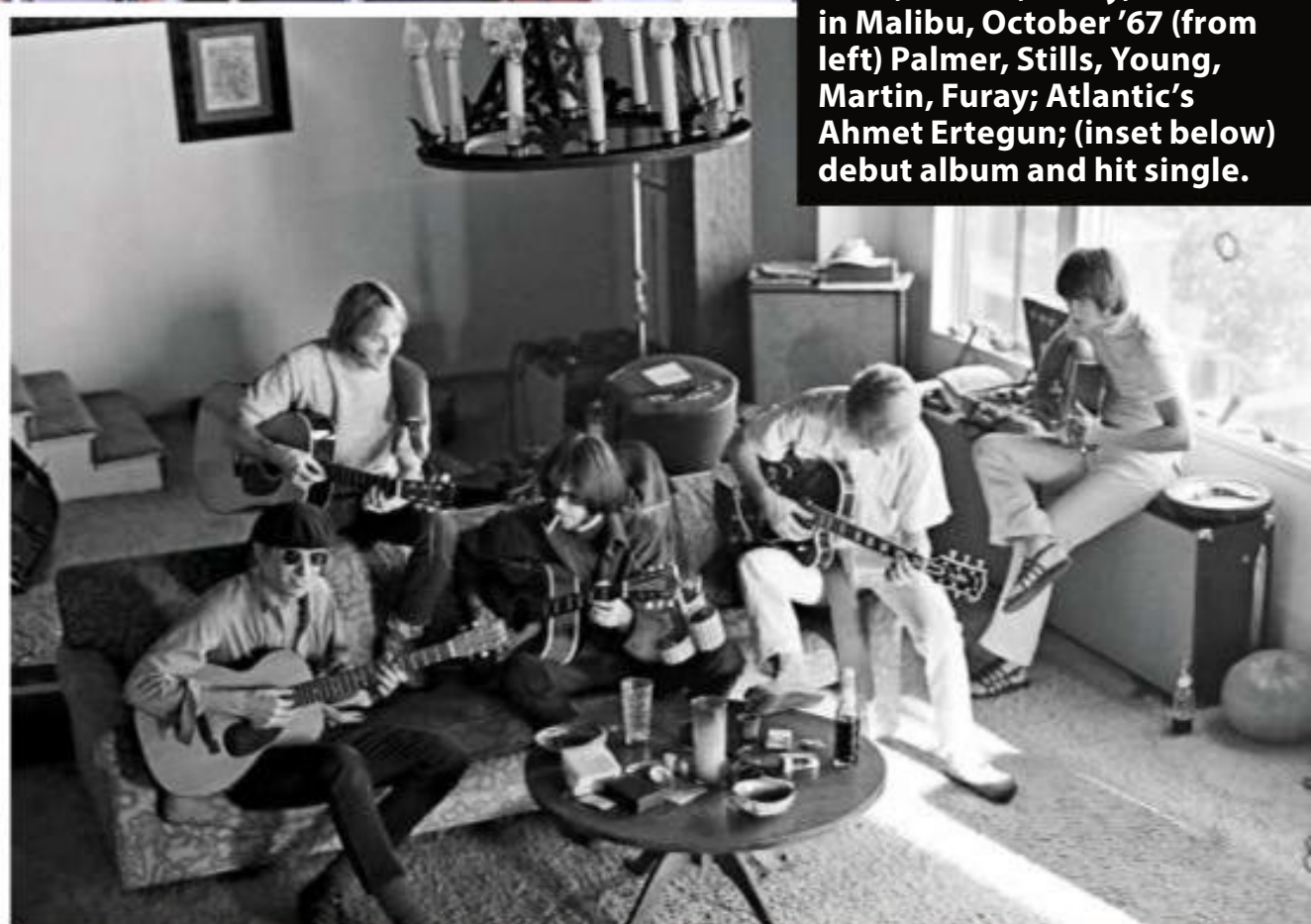
"Those Whisky shows," says Furay "were as good as we ever were." Young says much the same, adding fond memories of the white-booted, mini-skirted go-go dancers dancing in cages hung behind the band. "We knew them all. We would look up there and say hi to them. They were right there when we were playing. It was an inspiration."

The Springfield's on-stage guitar duels were a big attraction — Young at one end of the stage, Stills at the other, Neil "the Indian", wearing the fringed jacket he spent his first Whisky paycheck on; Stills in a cowboy Stetson, waistcoat and jeans. Martin looked like the aftermath of a shopping spree in Carnaby Street; Palmer, the "mystical" one, stood still as a statue, his back to the audience;

Henry Diltz, Getty (5)



What's that sound: at Gold Star Studios recording *Buffalo Springfield*, 1966 (clockwise from bottom left) Palmer; Stills, Martin, Young; Stills, Martin, Furay; at home in Malibu, October '67 (from left) Palmer, Stills, Young, Martin, Furay; Atlantic's Ahmet Ertegun; (inset below) debut album and hit single.



"IT WAS A CONSTANT BATTLE, I'LL TELL YOU. I THINK WE COMMUNICATED WITH GUITARS WHATEVER WAS ON OUR MINDS." *Neil Young*

Furay was centre-stage when he was not running up and down.

"No one knew who we were when we started," says Furay, "but at the end of our six-week run there were lots and lots of people lining up and wanting to get in."

They had new management — Mohawk was replaced by Charlie Greene and Brian Stone, who managed hit duo Sonny & Cher and boasted the longest stretch-limo in town. They also had write-ups in teen magazines: "The most good-looking and talented group since The Beatles". Best of all they had a record deal with Atlantic Records. The label's founder and head, Ahmet Ertegun, considered them "the most exciting band" he'd heard. They were booked into Gold Star Studios to record their debut album. Greene and Stone would produce.

THE PLAN WAS TO RECORD SIX SONGS BY Stills and six by Young. Furay, the peacemaker — or, as Stills describes him, "the voice of sanity amongst the band" — backed off from pushing his own. It ended up being seven to five in Stills' favour, likely because Stills' songs tended to be more blues-based and AM radio-friendly and less abstract than Young's. But it was a fine collection of songs, including Young's *Flying On The Ground Is Wrong* and *Out Of My Mind* and Stills' *Sit Down I Think I Love You* and *Everybody's Wrong*.

The fly in the ointment was the production. Stills and Young agreed that it failed to capture the energy, intensity and brilliance of the band's on-stage sound. Earlier, Springfield had made a live demo of a set at the Whisky which sounded infinitely better. Young still talks about that demo. Stills still says "it had a spirit to it that was all its own, that was never replicated."



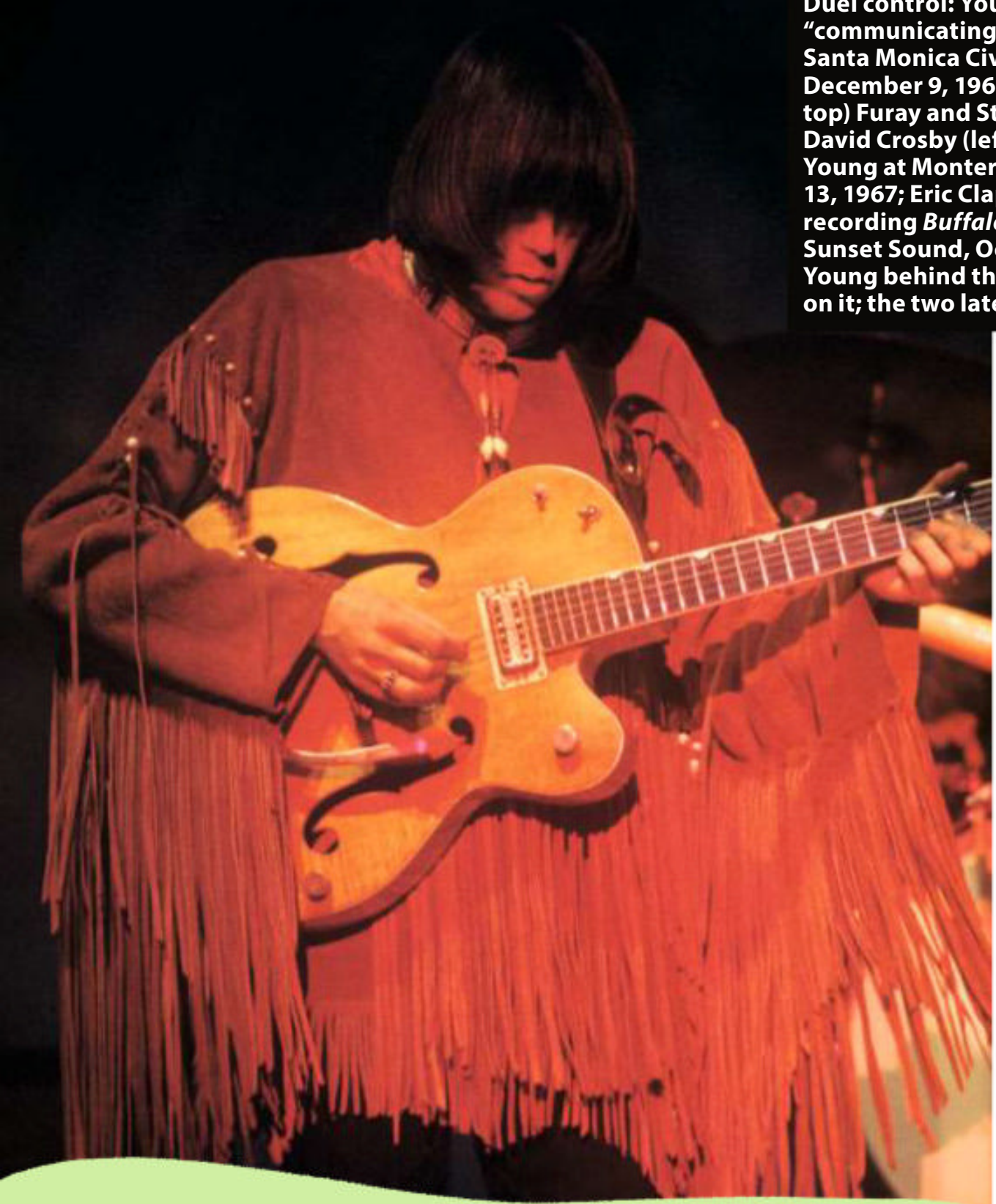
Greene and Stone, more used to working with session musicians the Wrecking Crew than with the bands themselves, put the blame on Springfield's inexperience in the studio. "We were one of the very first bands to actually play our own music in the studio at the time," Furay says. Whatever the reason, it was stressful — particularly, it seems, for Young. Having to be the backing vocalist on his own song while Furay sang lead wasn't easy. Then there was the parking meter incident. One of the team had gone out during a session to feed the meter. When he didn't return, Young went to look for him and found cops giving him a hard time. The police took exception to Young. Finding that his car had a number of unpaid tickets, they took him in, gave him a beating and Young had a grand mal seizure. After that, his epileptic seizures seemed to be more frequent, and often on-stage.

Despite Young's pleas to Ertegun to let them redo the album, *Buffalo Springfield* was released in December 1966. The first single was Young's *Nowadays Clancy Can't Even Sing*, sung by Furay. Stills got the B-side with *Go And Say Goodbye*. Neither the single nor the album was a hit.

Concerned about the LP's reception, Ertegun flew to California to see the band and Young, Stills and Furay played him some new songs they'd written for a second album. As they put away their instruments, Stills said, "Wait, I've got another song, for what it's worth." On an acoustic guitar he played Ertegun a then-unnamed folk song he said took him "a grand total of 15 minutes to write", inspired by the curfews and clashes with police outside the night-clubs on the Sunset Strip. It was both ominous and accessible, and Ertegun loved it.

"That's a hit, man!" he said. "We've got to record that," and ➤

Duel control: Young (left) and Stills, “communicating with guitars”, at Santa Monica Civic Auditorium, December 9, 1967; (opposite, from top) Furay and Stills with The Byrds’ David Crosby (left) substituting for Young at Monterey Pop Festival, June 13, 1967; Eric Clapton, busted in ‘68; recording *Buffalo Springfield Again* at Sunset Sound, October 31, 1967, Young behind the desk, Jim Messina on it; the two later Springfield albums.



GO AND SAY HELLO

**How Stephen Stills met Neil Young, “and life changed”.
By Stephen Stills.**

“I WAS IN Fort William, Ontario, now called Thunder Bay, with [folk group] The Company, the remnants of the cast of The Au Go Go Singers. God, I was looking for a job, and we got jobs across this little circuit of folk clubs called the Fourth Dimension. We played our first night and it was OK. It’s Canada, which is a world unto itself: the hockey finals are on, or the playoffs which last forever, and the people are very plain-spoken and drink a lot of beer and tend to fight later, so I would make myself scarce. Then Saturday night comes round and the owner of the club says, ‘There’s a guy who’s going to do a set between your sets, OK? He’s not very well-known, he’s a local kid from over Winnipeg’ – which is 400 frigging miles away!

Anyway, Neil gets up there [with The Squires] and he’s doing exactly what I want to do, which is to get a drummer and an electric guitar and bass and sing folk songs. So we immediately became friends. And as he is one of the more interesting people in the world, we were absolutely inseparable a good seven days.

The two groups, we just went everywhere. I saw my first buffalo and we would trade the songs we were working on and dream dreams. I went back to New York with the intention of getting The Squires a job and I knew there was paperwork and they’d need a

sponsor. So I called Neil’s mother, a very indomitable woman named Rassy. I said, ‘Hello, is this Neil’s mom? This is Stephen Stills. I’ve got him a sponsor and I think we can get the visas and everything.’ And [in a loud, piercing voice] she says, ‘He broke up the band, moved out and he’s taken up with this woman.’ I thought, ‘Oh God, he’s turned out to be a folk singer.’ She said, ‘If you find him, tell him to call his mother!’

So that’s when I hitched a ride from Greenwich Village to California, But it turned out I left a little early because soon after I left, Neil’s band all turned up in New

“Neil’s mom said, ‘If you find him, tell him to call his mother!’”

York after sneaking into the country. In New York Neil met Richie [Furay, another Au Go Go alumnus] and it was all, ‘I’m looking for Stephen Stills. Where’s Steve Stills?’

When me and Richie hooked up in California, Richie already knew [Neil’s song] Nowadays Clancy Can’t Even Sing and we had it all worked out. But we can’t find Neil. He’d gone back to Toronto or something. And then we’re driving down Sunset Strip and I see a hearse. Wow, a Pontiac hearse. With Ontario plates. Aha! I bet I know who that is! At the next traffic light I jumped out of the van, jumped around the hearse and beat on the window and went, ‘There you are!’ And we pulled over. And life changed.”

As told to Sylvie Simmons



◀ they did when Buffalo Springfield’s tour hit New York. Released as their second single, the song now titled For What It’s Worth (Stop, Hey What’s That Sound) went Top 10. Ertegun decided to pull the debut album and add the song to its second pressing.

“STEPHEN IS THE LEADER,” IT SAID ON *BUFFALO Springfield*’s back sleeve, “but we all are.” A good line, though not good enough to paper over ever-widening cracks in the band. Furay says: “As far as I’m concerned Buffalo Springfield was Stephen’s band.” He also feels that a lot of the tales told about Stills and Young’s epic fights “were made up. I’m not saying there weren’t disagreements and discussions. But I don’t remember those issues as being in the forefront at the time.”

Stills admits to some set-tos, but sees it in terms of a healthy rivalry that fed into the intensity of the music. “Neil and I did our thing, which is not to directly confront the tensions but to just sort of get on the stage and look at each other and play guitars and work everything out, without speaking directly to the issue like, ‘You’re in my way.’ We’d just play guitar, ferociously and then quietly, and it was all done.”

Young doesn’t appear to disagree. “He’s on the top of the beat and I’m on the back of it. It was a constant battle, I’ll tell you. I think we ‘communicated’ with guitars whatever was on our minds. If it was belligerent, so be it. There were also many more times when it was just beautiful.”

There were also times, though, when Young just walked away or didn’t show. Their gig at the Monterey Pop Festival, for example. (They brought in David Crosby to replace him.) Or the Tonight show, another big deal for the band. “He just disappeared, man,” says Furay. “We were at the airport and no Neil.” Young didn’t like the idea of doing a popular talk show. And he was a loner. By the time it came to making a second Springfield album, Young was off working on his own with producer Jack Nitzsche.

Admits Stills, “I was much more of a team guy. I loved being in a band. It was always readily apparent that Neil was more of a self-



“THE COPS WERE SPRAYING CLAPTON WITH BUG SPRAY, GIGGLING AND LAUGHING. IT WAS HUMILIATING.”

Jim Messina



“I was taken aback. ‘Is there a reason you’re choosing me?’ He said, ‘We’ve been trying to find somebody for the band for a long time. They’ve had issues in the past with other people, and you seem to be the only person that they trust.’ I recall from the conversation that he really loved this band, it was one of his favourites. I just said, ‘Sure, I’d love to do that if that’s something they want and you want.’”



THE MAKING OF THE THIRD SPRINGfield album is an epic story in itself. Once again there were good songs — Young’s I Am A Child and On The Way Home; Stills’ Latin-flavoured Pretty Girl Why; Messina’s Carefree Country Day; Furay’s Kind Woman and his co-write with Young, It’s So Hard To Wait. Messina kept his word and made a fine album, with the help of Furay and a number of outside musicians, it proving impossible to get all the band in the studio at the same time. They couldn’t even get Young to show up for the front cover photo session. They ended up pasting him on, facing the opposite direction.

By the end of April 1968, *Last Time Around* was finished and so, to all intents and purposes, was the Buffalo Springfield. But there were a few remaining shows booked and they met at Stills’ house to rehearse. Eric Clapton was there, jamming. “The next moment,” Messina recalls, “there were cops coming in every door. Neil and I and Richie and his wife were going, ‘What’s going on?’ Apparently a couple of ladies there, I don’t think anybody knew who they were, had marijuana on them.”

The police, who had been at the house the previous night because of noise complaints, arrested everyone in the room on felony narcotics charges and hauled them off to the county jail where the routine, says Messina, was “they strip you down to your underwear and spray you with bug spray.”

The cops took a particular dislike to Clapton, with his long hair, pink boots and British accent. They separated him from the rest and hosed him down with extra enthusiasm.

“They were spraying him and giggling and laughing,” says Messina. “It was humiliating.” While all this was going on, Young had an epileptic seizure. The police tossed him in the drunk tank. As for Stills, he never made it to the jail. Somehow he’d managed to escape out of a window at his house.

But the bust wasn’t what broke them up. As Furay says, “With nine people in and out of the band in two years, I think we knew it was coming.” After their last show on May 5, 1968 at the Long Beach Auditorium, the band met with Ertegun to tell him it was over. Ertegun reportedly cried. “I was in tears too,” says Messina, “because I really thought it was a great group of talented people.”

Says Furay, “I always said as long as Stephen’s in the band I’ll stay, but it finally got down to that point where we knew it was over and Stephen was going to call it a day.”

Why did Stills, who had dreamed the band all that time, decide to chuck it in? Because without Neil Young it couldn’t be Buffalo Springfield? Or was there never so simple a reason?

“You know,” sighs Stills, “things happen that way. Chalk it up to evolving dreams.”



contained person so it came as no surprise that he persisted in leaving.”

Why not kick Young out? Was it a Beatles thing, the double threat, a Paul and a John upping each other’s game? “It was all the above,” says Stills. “Yes we helped each other’s game, yes it was a Beatles thing, yes I wanted to team up because the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.”

Another Springfield had a disappearing act of his own. Bruce Palmer kept getting arrested for pot and deported to Canada. The band would find another bassist only for Palmer to sneak back into the States. All of which turned the recording of their second album into a protracted affair. This time, several of Furay’s songs made the cut, including A Child’s Claim To Fame and Sad Memory. Great songs too from Stills — Bluebird; Rock & Roll Woman — although the most compelling were Young’s: Mr Soul; the ambitious Broken Arrow; and the ornate Expecting To Fly, which Young recorded with Nitzsche, who arranged the strings.

Buffalo Springfield Again outperformed their debut, making the US Top 50. But the band itself was not in such great shape.

“I wouldn’t say they were the best friends but I would say they were friendly and respectful towards each other,” says sometime Springfield bassist and producer Jim Messina. “I can understand in retrospect that the group wasn’t getting along that well, though none of them showed any of that stuff to me. You have to realise I was young and very inexperienced in the ways of drama and I wasn’t into drugs or alcohol; they used to call me ‘Mr Straight-Ahead.’”

Messina’s first contact with the Springfield was as an engineer on *Buffalo Springfield Again*. In January ’68, with Palmer on the wrong side of the border again, he picked up the bass. And then he got offered another job — Ahmet Ertegun asked him to produce a third album with the band.





"That was one of the favourite shows that we ever did": (main) Bruce Springsteen on-stage at the MUSE No Nukes benefit, Madison Square Garden, New York City, September 21, 1979; (top) MUSE co-founder Jackson Browne performs at Battery Park City No Nukes Rally, September 23, 1979; the Battery Park City crowd.

NO NUKES AWAKENS 'POLITICAL' SPRINGSTEEN

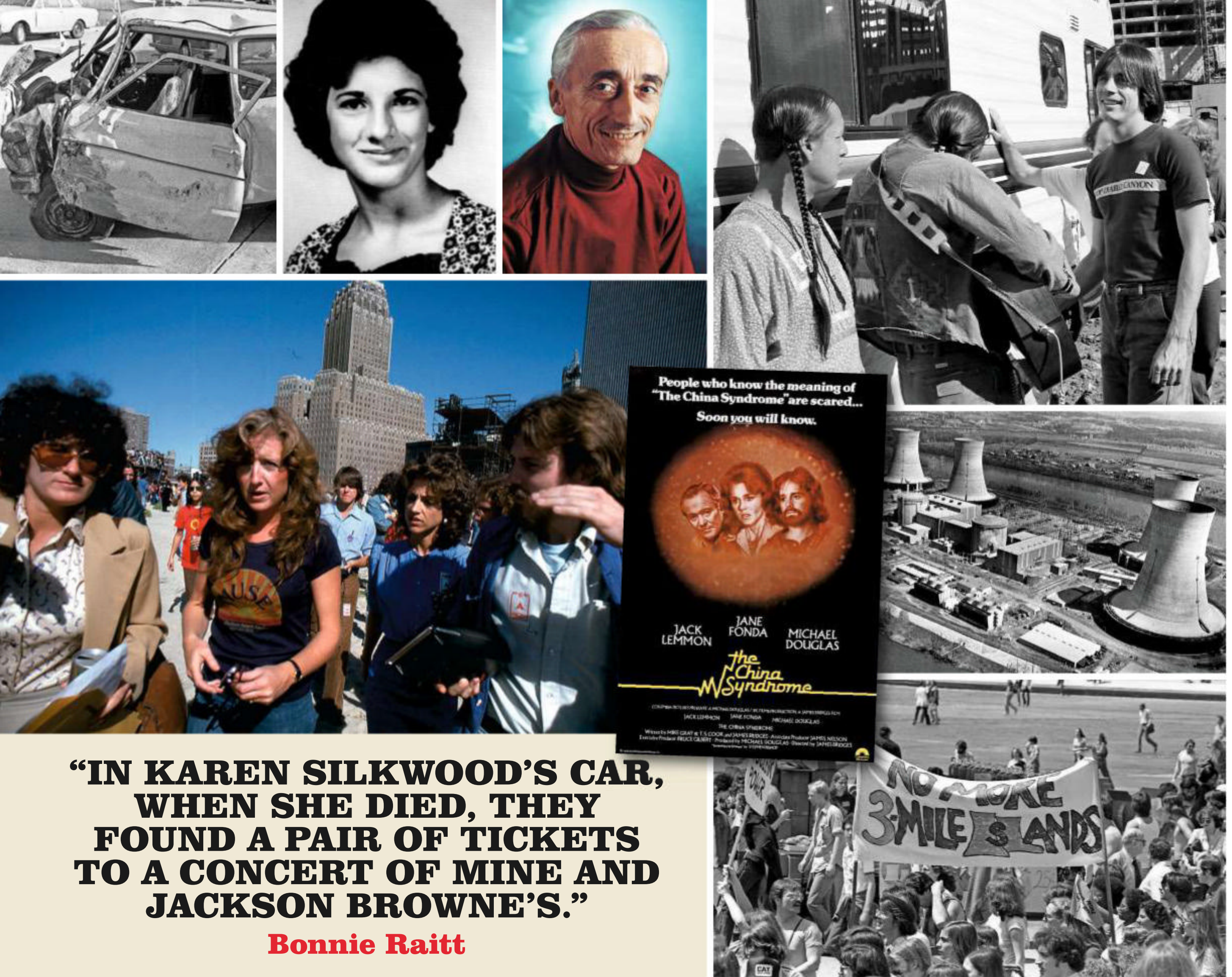
Inspired by Jacques Cousteau, driven by Jackson Browne and Bonnie Raitt, starring Springsteen, CSN and more, September 1979's **MUSE/NO NUKES** concerts set about hippping the world to the catastrophic dangers of atomic energy. As a film and audio of The Boss's landmark sets nears release, its organisers and performers recall an Indian Summer of rock'n'roll idealism: "It wasn't the typical narcissistic rock star vibe."

Interviews: **BOB MEHR** • Portrait by **RICHARD E AARON**

Jackson Browne: My [activism] was a natural outgrowth of becoming more interested in the world. I'd read a book called *Eco-Catastrophe*, by Dr Paul Ehrlich. That, and a book that Linda Ronstadt gave me about the firebombing of Dresden. It became clear to me that a society without justice was not tenable.

The people in the civil rights movement were involved in the anti-war movement, and when the environmental movement emerged it was the same people – all of whom were concerned with justice, in this case environmental justice, and building a sustainable future. I started doing benefits with [activist/concert promoter] Tom Campbell. Sometimes it was about preserving the forests, or focusing on Native American concerns, as well as environmental things. ➤

Ebet Roberts/Getty Images, Getty (2)



“IN KAREN SILKWOOD’S CAR, WHEN SHE DIED, THEY FOUND A PAIR OF TICKETS TO A CONCERT OF MINE AND JACKSON BROWNE’S.”

Bonnie Raitt

◀ Tom’s the one that introduced me to the issue of nuclear waste and the danger of nuclear containment. Part of the problem is the waste lasts so long. I can never remember if the half-life is 28,000 years or 128,000 years... but does it matter? That’s a long time either way.

Bonnie Raitt: Being raised a Quaker in California, our family was steeped in a lot of peace activism and the ban the bomb movement. Even as a kid the whole idea of the nuclear threat was an issue I was aware of. As the ’70s wore on, the whole issue of uranium mining and environmental racism against the Native American community was becoming prevalent. By the time ’77, ’78 came around we started to do a whole string of concerts and rallies at nuclear plants around the country.

Graham Nash: In 1977, I was at a dinner with Jacques Cousteau. I asked him, “What do you think the biggest problem facing humanity is?” I’m expecting a fish-related answer (*laughs*) or something to do with oceans. But he looked at me and said: “Nuclear police.”

JB: Cousteau did this gathering that was attended by a lot of musicians and people in Hollywood. The point he made was that nuclear power required such stringent safeguards that it would foment a police state. And there was also the fact you can’t really protect the population from the waste or contamination anyway.

BR: All that dovetailed into the first part of 1979 and the case of Karen Silkwood [the anti-nuclear whistleblower who died under mysterious circumstances in 1974]. Her family

approached me to do a concert. In her car, when she died, they found a pair of tickets to an Oklahoma City concert of mine and Jackson Browne’s. They knew we were some of her favourite artists and asked us to do a benefit to raise funds to bring a suit against the Kerr-McKee corporation to prove she was murdered. Organising that concert kind of became the germ of the No Nukes work.

JB: John Hall [singer with the band Orleans] and [activist] David Fenton had an idea of doing a really big concert to get the word out on the nuclear issue. What happened between when we started planning the concerts and actually doing them was *The China Syndrome* – the Jane Fonda and Michael Douglas film about a nuclear meltdown – came out, and the Silkwood thing was being written about by Howard Kohn in *Rolling Stone* and then the Three Mile Island accident [a radiation leak in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania in March 1979] happened almost all at once. Suddenly this issue felt much more urgent.

BR: I think Three Mile Island really scared the pants off everybody, as did *The China Syndrome* and the Silkwood story. The blinders were off and people knew the implications.

GN: Out of that, Bonnie and Jackson started MUSE [Musicians United for Safe Energy] and invited me to join the board. The plan was to do a No Nukes show at Madison Square Garden in New York City.

JB: I’d never been on the board of anything. But we had a meeting with Tom Campbell and

Bonnie and Graham about doing a concert. James Taylor said he wouldn’t join the board, but he would play. Then we got the Doobie Brothers to commit. They were like the biggest band in America and had a bunch of hit records. Then it was like maybe we should do two nights or three nights. Then we got Bruce Springsteen, which was huge.

Bruce Springsteen: I was searching around for some way to connect what I was doing musically with some tangible action... What I wouldn’t have done is offer the power of my band casually. Because that was something I believed in and was very serious about.

JB: We added Tom Petty and a bunch of other people – Carly Simon, Ry Cooder, Peter Tosh, Chaka Khan. Eventually, we had to hold six nights at Madison Square Garden, and ended up doing five shows there.

BR: One night turned into two, turned into three and more – people were all climbing all over each other to be part of this show. It snowballed.

JB: I should point out, though, that not one person I asked actually did it (*laughs*). I asked the Eagles and that was no. I asked Linda Ronstadt, that was no. I asked Bob Dylan – no. I asked Stevie Wonder – no. I asked Fleetwood Mac – no. So I stopped asking. Clearly I’m no good at this (*laughs*). It was not that anybody disagreed with the cause. They didn’t have the time or it didn’t correspond to their schedule. Maybe some people were weirded out by being part of a big organised thing like that. Bob [mentioned] the controversy over [The Concert For Bangladesh]



DRAMATIS PERSONAE



● **Jackson Browne:** singer-songwriter, MUSE [Musicians United for Safe Energy] co-founder



● **Bonnie Raitt:** singer/guitarist, MUSE co-founder



● **Graham Nash:** Crosby, Stills & Nash, MUSE co-founder



● **Danny Goldberg:** co-director/producer No Nukes film



● **Bruce Springsteen:** leader of Bruce Springsteen & The E Street Band, No Nukes headliner



● **Little Steven Van Zandt:** E Street Band member, No Nukes performer



Now let the music keep our spirits high: (opposite, clockwise from top left) Karen Silkwood and her wrecked car; Jacques Cousteau; Jackson Browne with Native Americans at No Nukes; Three Mile Island; protest in Washington DC, April '79; Bonnie Raitt meets the press at No Nukes; The China Syndrome movie poeter; (this page, from left) the E Street Band's Clarence Clemons and Roy Bittan, Tom Petty, Springsteen, Browne and Rosemary Butler at Madison Square Garden, September '79.

and whether the money got to where it was supposed to go. He was leery of that. Linda didn't do it, because she didn't want to complicate things for Jerry Brown [the Governor of California], 'cos she was dating Jerry. But everyone was fundamentally in support of the cause.

GN: The truth is we had a headliner for each of the shows except the last one. And Jackson and Bonnie knew that me and David Crosby and Stephen Stills weren't talking to each other at that point. I thought about it and I realised the nuclear problem was a far bigger problem than any issues David and Stephen and I were having. So I called them and asked if they would [reunite] and do the show and they said 'Absolutely'. So we had CSN as the headliner for the final night.

JB: We were sorta looked at askance by the liberal left establishment. When the shows were announced, the Village Voice ran something that said, "Oh I can't wait to see the cocaine bills... these are the worst people to come in and get involved in a serious fight like this..." They were clearly contemptuous of rock'n'roll. And you realise that's the problem with people who've been activists their whole life. They don't see the value of new people coming into the struggle and helping with whatever they have to offer. But we were determined.

JB: We talked to several film-makers and chose Barbara Kopple because of her credentials as a documentarian, like [1976 strike portrait] Harlan County, USA. She brought in Haskell Wexler – another great film-maker, an Academy Award winning cinematographer – to help shoot it.

BR: There was a lot of terrific grass-roots organisations doing important [anti-nuclear] work, but the press wouldn't cover them. We had learned by watching Joan Baez and Bob Dylan and The Staple Singers go to the rallies and marches in the '60s. We knew that the press shows up for musicians. That gives you an opportunity to highlight the other side of the issue – other than the corporate side or the government side. Which is also why we decided to make a film of the concerts.

Danny Goldberg: I was a publicist working some of the artists. David Fenton thought there should be a movie made about the shows and the effort. He suggested that I take the lead on trying to put a movie together. Why anyone thought I could do a movie, or why I thought that... I dunno. But Jackson gave me the nod. The goal was to create a larger public awareness for the issue through these rock artists. The only way to get a movie funded and distributed was to have it be about the music and performances, but include enough about the issue so that people understood the situation.

DG: Actually, John Avildsen, who was best known for directing [huge-grossing 1976 boxing drama] Rocky, was the first name that popped up. He wasn't as enthusiastic about it being a concert doc with politics in it. He preferred to reverse the ratio. Avildsen dropped out. Barbara was there for the shooting. But eventually Julian Schlossberg, [Anthony Potenza] and I ended up co-directing and co-producing the film.

JB: The whole thing was a lot to organise. Just to take care of all these bands, and the logistics. There hadn't been a lot of these kinds of shows at that point – there was Monterey, Woodstock, Bangladesh. But Tom Campbell did a tremendous job coordinating everything. I think the only mistake we made is there were people who wanted to do it and we didn't put them on, like Aerosmith and Blondie. We could've had a night that represented a whole different part of rock'n'roll that was in so many ways more street level. I didn't know about some of that until it was all over. You're telling me Aerosmith want to do this? Why not? Steven Tyler actually showed up at some of the gigs and was in the finales. He was there and was into the cause.

DG: Bruce Springsteen was one of the headliners and people really remember his performances. But Tom Petty was also fantastic. He played on two nights. He was kind of a victim of the "Broooooce!" chants. Bruce was really in the ascendancy then. I think one of the nights Bruce headlined was his 30th birthday and the shows were in his backyard, obviously.

Tom Petty: It was our first time in an arena that size, and we hadn't played in a year. We flew ➤



The bigger issue: (from left) David Crosby, Graham Nash and Stephen Stills forget their differences and reunite, Battery Park City, September 23, 1979; (top, from left) David Bowie and Springsteen, backstage at MSG; longtime anti-nuke campaigners Pete Seeger and Jane Fonda at the rally.

Fred W McDarrah/Getty Images, Ebet Roberts/Getty Images, Getty (4), Camera Press (2), Alamy (2)

in for two days, rehearsed, and went to play with Elvis in Memphis – or that’s what I called it... I remember, Jackson Browne said, when we were going up, “Well listen, now, if you think they’re booing you, they’re not. They’re just saying ‘Broooce.’” I said, “Well, what the hell is the difference?”

JB: There was a moment where they weren’t saying “Broooce,” they were really booing. There were people who actually booed Chaka Khan. There were people in Bruce’s audience that hated disco. It wasn’t like Chaka Khan was a disco singer – she’s one of the most gifted singers in the history of singing, goddammit. And she came out and got a ration of New Jersey ignorance. I’m sorry... but there’s no other word for it.

In fairness, Bruce was having a moment. For those of us that had been listening to him all along, you share in the triumph of that. His fans were a very big part of that event. Ahh, I don’t mean to call it New Jersey ignorance. But I think anyone who boos anyone on stage should be taken out of the room. Fuck that shit.

BR: Really though, the camaraderie of the shows was wonderful. The joy for us was not only hanging backstage but sitting on the side of the stage and watching each other play. It was peer pressure – you wanted to impress your peers! It really elevated all of our performances. I think

everybody was on their A game. I was afraid that I hadn’t had enough sleep and I was going to choke vocally. But you’re just lit from within in those situations. The oxytocin in that room was off the charts.

BS: That was one of the favourite shows that we ever did. I liked working with all those different people. The thing about the Nukes show was we only played an hour; and it was fun (*laughs*) because you could go like a runaway train in an hour.

DG: It wasn’t the typical narcissistic rock star vibe. It was a semi-party atmosphere, but not a decadent one. It was more idealistic – the coming together of music and politics. That hadn’t been the case for most of the ’70s. That had almost become passé after the war in Vietnam ended. This was a rebirth of that spirit.

GN: It was an amazing set of concerts, and afterwards we did a rally at Battery Park for a quarter of a million people. In my mind, when I think of shows I’ve done, there’s Woodstock, No Nukes and possibly CSN singing Happy Birthday a cappella to Bill Clinton at The White House. Those are the first three I think of where I go, “That was pretty good. We did all right.”

JB: We recorded all the shows and a couple of record companies wanted to put it out. One of

them was the label I was on [Asylum]. I didn’t want to use my position to put this on my label. But David Geffen called me up said, “You’re doing this wrong. You *should* be getting this for your label – you’ll have greater success and more influence with the company that puts it out.” So [Asylum] got it. It was a triple album and they agreed to do it for a nominal fee, they weren’t trying to make money. The thing they said was we want to put it out for Christmas, while the event is still fresh in everyone’s mind. The shows were in September, and the record had to come out in November, which meant we spent the next couple months just working non-stop.

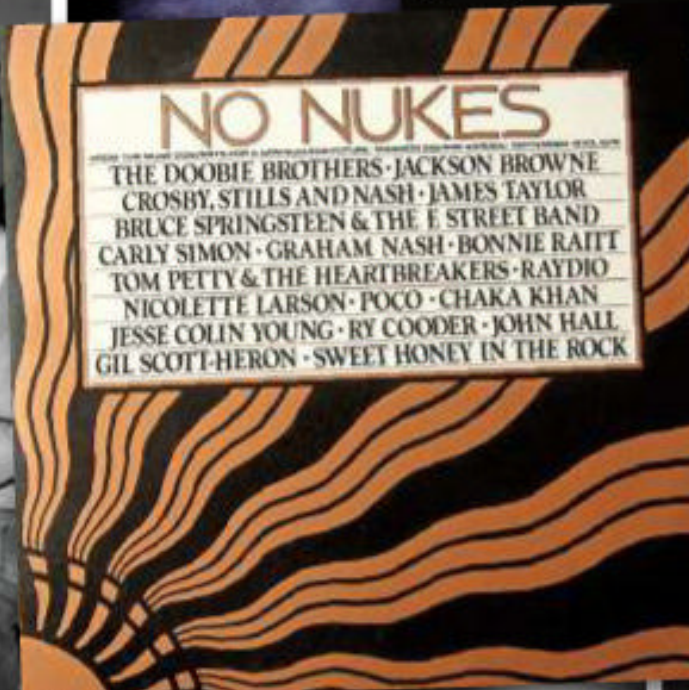
DG: It had more value as a Christmas release. And also we needed the advance to pay for the first stage of making the movie. We used the record advance to pay for the editing. Then later we made a separate deal with Warner Brothers pictures to release the film.

GN: Jackson and I spent a lot of time mixing the record without a break – we had to get it out. And Jackson, God bless his cotton socks, he might leave for an hour and take his kids to school, but then he was there the other 23 hours a day mixing the record.

JB: We had an expression called “MUSE feet”, ‘cos you were literally on your feet so long every day



Like a runaway train: (clockwise from left) Bruce and Clarence; Joan Baez; No Nukes movie and album; Chaka Khan; backstage banter (seated, from left) Carly Simon, Steven Tyler and James Taylor, (standing centre) John Hall and (far right) Paul Simon.



“I WAS SEARCHING AROUND FOR SOME WAY TO CONNECT WHAT I WAS DOING MUSICALLY WITH SOME TANGIBLE ACTION.”

Bruce Springsteen



that your feet would swell up. It was a pretty hands-on process and we did a lot of this work at Graham's studio in Hollywood. We had a tight deadline and we somehow made it.

BR: I don't think Graham and Jackson slept for months. Luckily we had youth and righteousness on our side.

JB: The film came out about six months later. It has a lot of great performances in there – a lot of treasures, like James [Taylor] and Carly [Simon] doing *Mockingbird*. But because it was shot on film and that cost a lot of money, they thought, “Well let's just shoot one or two songs and that's enough of that artist.” The only person whose entire set got filmed was Bruce. And now that's coming out, which is great, because it's totally worthy of being seen.

DG: Bruce was deeply interested in the filming process. He came into the editing room more than any other artist. He would sit there and comment on every single shot. It's interesting looking back because *No Nukes* is the first political thing Bruce ever did. That began his role as someone who weighed in on politics.

BS: *Roulette*, a portrait of a family man caught in the shadow of the Three Mile Island nuclear accident, was the first song we cut [for *The River*, 1980]. The MUSE concerts... had been

our entrance into the public political arena. *Roulette* was written and recorded shortly after those shows.

Steven Van Zandt: It was also sort of my first engagement with politics too... Jackson Browne became a lifelong friend and a kind of political mentor, in a way. Everything I was interested in, he'd already been there. I'd get to some Indian reservation in the middle of South Dakota, four hours to the nearest airport, and they'd say, “Oh, you just missed Jackson – he was here last week” (*laughs*).

JB: We haven't put out the original *No Nukes* film on DVD. I feel like it would be a disservice to the movement to only portray it in retrospect, something that happened once upon a time in a universe far, far away. We'd have to figure out how to make a new film that would provide information about the movement and what's happened in the last 40 years. You have to continue to tell the story. I mean, *No Nukes* succeeded in that there were no new nuclear plants ordered from that point on. We thought we had dealt a serious blow to the nuclear power industry. And the rest of the fight was about shutting the plants down. And it still is. It's not over.

BR: There's 92 nuclear plants still operating, and there's 21 that have shut down. After the

Fukushima [Japanese nuclear plant] disaster in 2011, we did another *No Nukes* show – but all along the way we've kept our efforts going. Jackson and myself and Graham in particular, we'll add a dollar onto our concert tickets and donate that and do profit sharing with all the *No Nukes*-affiliated groups. We continue to talk about it and fund it with our touring and private donations.

DG: Looking back, it's one of the few movements that people like me have been involved in that haven't ended in disappointment or heartbreak – unlike the spread of guns, or global warming. It was a successful movement that's somewhat forgotten, maybe because it wasn't as cosmically important as civil rights or feminism or gay rights. But it is an example of something that actually worked – the combination of grassroots organisation, of public opinion, of progressive elected officials, and the creative community all coming together. At a time when it's easy to become demoralised, it's always good to remember the few victories that we've had. **M**

Tom Petty interview from Musician magazine, 1981; Bruce Springsteen quotes from Peter Ames Carlin's Bruce, and Bruce Springsteen's Born To Run, also from Creem, 1981. Special thanks to Backstreets magazine. Bruce Springsteen & The E Street Band: The Legendary 1979 No Nukes Concerts is available on DVD, Blu-ray, CD and vinyl from November 19.

"THERE WAS A MAGICAL

UNTITLED, ENIGMATIC, MYSTERIOUS, PHENOMENAL, **LED-ZEPPELIN**'S FOURTH ALBUM AND AMBITION. FIFTY YEARS ON, ITS THREE SURVIVING CREATORS CALL TRUCE TO AND *THAT SONG*. "IT WAS SUCH AN INSPIRED TIME FOR *EVERYBODY*," THEY TELL



CURRENT RUNNING THROUGH THAT RECORD"

DEFINED ROCK'N'ROLL AT THE EXTREMITY OF ITS BREADTH
WRESTLE WITH ITS LEGACY AND REMEMBER CIDER, RUNES
MARK BLAKE. PHOTOGRAPH BY WOLFGANG HEILEMANN.

Wolfgang Heilemann/Camera Press

Four's company: (from left)
Jimmy Page, Robert Plant,
John Bonham, John Paul
Jones, backstage at the
Hardrock Concert Theatre,
Stretford, Manchester,
December 8, 1972.



IN NOVEMBER 1830 THE HAMPSHIRE COUNTRYSIDE WAS SHAKEN BY AN ACT OF violent civil disorder. Several hundred labourers ransacked two workhouses as a protest against the local gentry exploiting the poor. The establishments looted and set ablaze included Headley Grange, near Lindford. Two men would hang for their part in these riots. Among those who tried to quell the disturbance was the High Sheriff of Hampshire, one John Bonham-Carter.

Almost a century and a half later, Led Zeppelin drummer John ‘Bonzo’ Bonham would attempt to raze Headley Grange a second time. Bonham’s seismic beats on their fourth album’s *When The Levee Breaks* – recorded in the pile’s resonant stairwell – sound loud enough to have crumbled stone and, who knows, maybe rouse the ghosts of Headley’s martyrs.

“It’s like there was a magical current running through that place and that record,” says Led Zeppelin’s guitarist and gatekeeper Jimmy Page today. “Like it was meant to be.”

John Bonham died in 1980. Page, vocalist Robert Plant and bassist/keyboard player John Paul Jones are revisiting their fourth album on the eve of its 50th birthday and the arrival of a new film, *Becoming Led Zeppelin*, about their formative years.

Page has curated Led Zeppelin’s back catalogue with an archaeologist’s attention to detail. He rings on an overcast bank holiday and apologises for being one minute late, but speaks guardedly, as though divulging Led Zeppelin’s secrets might diminish their power. Several answers are preceded with the words, “Well... let’s put it this way.”

Robert Plant calls from the seaside, with the babble of children’s laughter in the background. “I’m in sunny Borth, west Wales,” he announces. The singer is less afraid to let his guard slip but also hides his feelings behind flippant remarks and wild tangents. “Let me know when you’re doing 50 years of *Physical Graffiti*,” he quips later. “If I’m still here, I’ll talk.”

Finally, John Paul Jones appears via Zoom (bare wall, no visible home furnishings). Zeppelin’s multi-tasking multi-instrumentalist seems surprisingly pleased to be here. “Last year has been like Groundhog Day,” he sighs, “with occasional bursts of creativity.”

Myth and mystery shrouds Zeppelin’s fourth LP like “rings of smoke through the trees”, to quote its most played song. It’s untitled, but widely known as ‘Led Zeppelin IV’ or ‘The Four Symbols’.

“I’d like to call it ‘ZoSo’ but won’t,” laughs Page, referencing his symbol, one of four representing each band member that appear on the inner sleeve.

With over 37 million sales, *Led Zeppelin IV* is the everyman’s Led Zeppelin album. Widescreen ballads, primal rockabilly, trippy blues and rustic folk – all Led Zeppelin life is here. *Stairway To Heaven* is now a cultural touchstone, referenced in mainstream films and TV, while Beastie Boys, Beyoncé and even solo Plant have sampled its songs.

“It’s a serious body of work,” states Page.

“I just listened to the album again and it hasn’t dated,” says Jones.

“Is it the best one?” ponders Plant. “I don’t know... How can you sum up 50 years of chaos? But who knows whether it was ordered chaos or a magnificent accident?”

WHEN LED ZEPPELIN ARRIVED AT Headley Grange in January 1971 they’d barely stopped moving during the preceding two-and-a-half years. Former teenage session prodigy and ex-Yardbirds guitarist Page launched his new group in autumn 1968, where they swiftly graduated from London’s Marquee to America’s underground club circuit.

“With Led Zeppelin, we concentrated on America from the moment we got a foot in the door,” he says. Zeppelin landed in the US in the midst of anti-Vietnam war protests, drug busts and a chasm-like generational divide. “We’d play six weeks at a time,” adds Page. “Any longer and you could get drafted into the army.”

Their elemental blues-rock quickly found a home at hip venues such as the Fillmores East and West and Chicago’s Kinetic Playground. *Led Zeppelin I* and *II* bookended 1969. But the likes of *Communication Breakdown* and *Whole Lotta Love* suggested the ’70s had arrived early. Zeppelin defied convention by refusing to release singles, relying instead on word of mouth and America’s album-friendly FM radio format.

“There were a few entrepreneurial DJs back home playing underground music,” says Plant. “But the doors were wide open in America. You could hear Gershwin alongside the Iron Butterfly. Zeppelin were made to measure without even realising it.”

The message quickly spread back home. In June 1970, Led Zeppelin headlined the Bath Festival Of Blues & Progressive Music, above US rock royalty the Mothers Of Invention and Jefferson Airplane, and were voted ‘The World’s Top Group’ above The Beatles in *Melody Maker*.

But there was confusion. “Some people thought we were American,” says Jones. “They’d read reports from America and just presumed. Of course once Robert opened his mouth to speak, they immediately knew he wasn’t.”

Confusion escalated when Led Zeppelin released a third LP that October. Page and Plant had taken a songwriting sabbatical at Bron-Yr-Aur, a remote cottage in Wales’ Dyfi Valley, and the location and ambience tapped the group’s acoustic side. “If you’ve got a cottage without electricity and running water overlooking the Welsh countryside, you’re going to write *Led Zeppelin III*,” suggests Page.

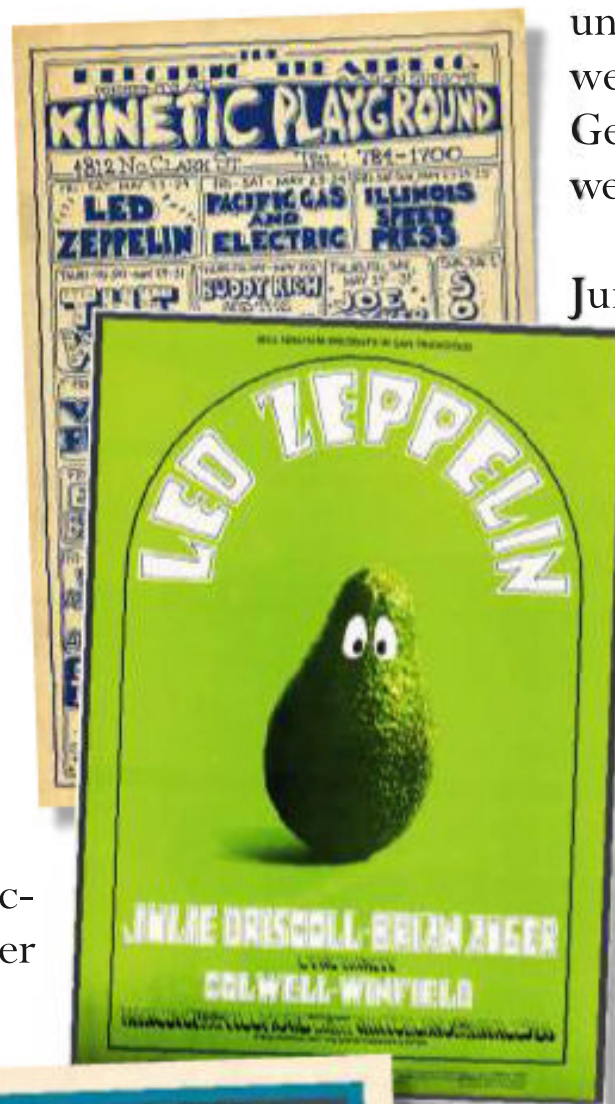
Not everybody was enthused. “My main impression was the consistent anonymity of most of the songs,” wrote *Rolling Stone*’s Lester Bangs.

Today, it’s fascinating to hear Jimmy Page bristle at critical slights from the last century.

“*Rolling Stone* – no matter what we did – were giving us a lot of crap,” he bristles. “I was on-stage seeing the reaction, and then reading reviews and thinking, They are definitely out to get us.”

PAGE’S PARANOIA SHAPED HIS THOUGHTS about the band’s fourth album. He wanted to remove Led Zeppelin from the outside world and its critical orthodoxy, to exist and operate solely on their own terms. The new record would not even have a title.

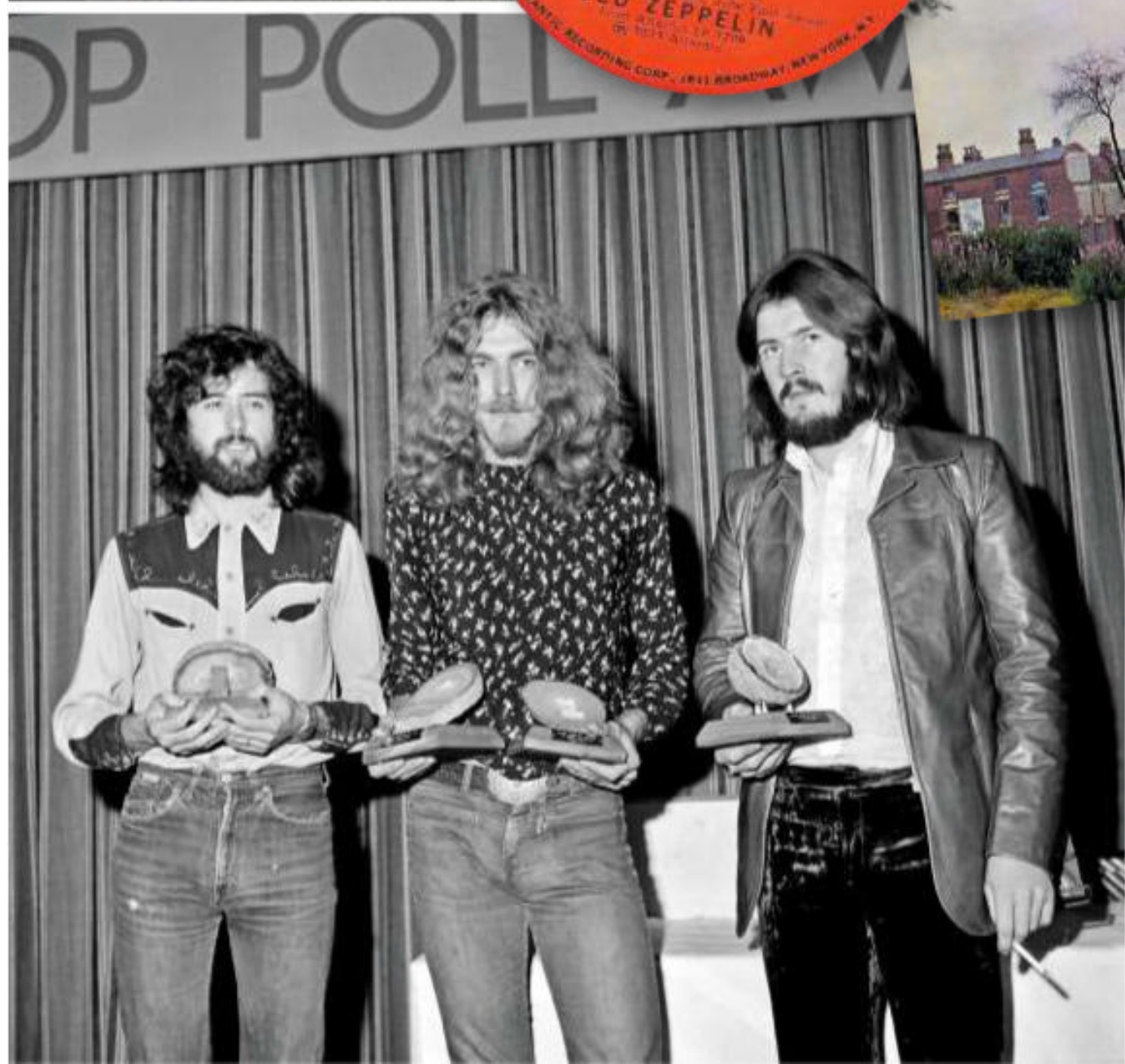
But initial sessions were not as productive as he had hoped. After another stint at Bron-Yr-Aur, Page ➤



Zep shows and Headley Grange tipples: “But there was no, ‘Let’s get pissed.’”

Make you sweat: Led Zeppelin get moving at Newcastle's Mayfair Ballroom, March 18, 1971; (below, left) Page, Plant and Bonham all gonged up as Best British Group at the Melody Maker Pop Poll Awards, September 16, 1970; (right) Headley Grange.

"WE WERE DRINKING PINT MUGS OF CIDER AND PUTTING THE POKER IN THE FIRE AND PLUNGING IT INTO THE CIDER - LIKE A SWORD." JONES



GOOD TIMES GOOD TIMES?

NEW DOC, BECOMING LED ZEPPELIN, FOCUSES ON THEIR ROOTS AND RISE. JIMMY PAGE LOVES IT, FINDS MARK BLAKE

THOSE STILL awaiting a follow-up to Led Zeppelin's 1976 concert movie *The Song Remains The Same* need wait no more. *Becoming Led Zeppelin*, the band's first official documentary, is imminent, having enjoyed its premiere at September's Venice Film Festival.

As the title suggests, it focuses on Led Zeppelin's roots and early years. "When [director] Bernard MacMahon and [co-producer] Allison McGourty first approached me, I thought, Gosh, they've got it, they really understand what happened," Page tells MOJO.

The film's first 60 minutes, however, explore the band

members' lives growing up in post-war Britain. "Showing how Led Zeppelin came together and what elements dictated it," says Page, whose time as a '60s session musician comes under particular scrutiny.

Becoming Led Zeppelin traces a line between their formative influences (Elvis Presley, Chuck Berry, Lonnie Donegan), 20-year-old Page's guitar solo on Shirley Bassey's *Goldfinger* and the

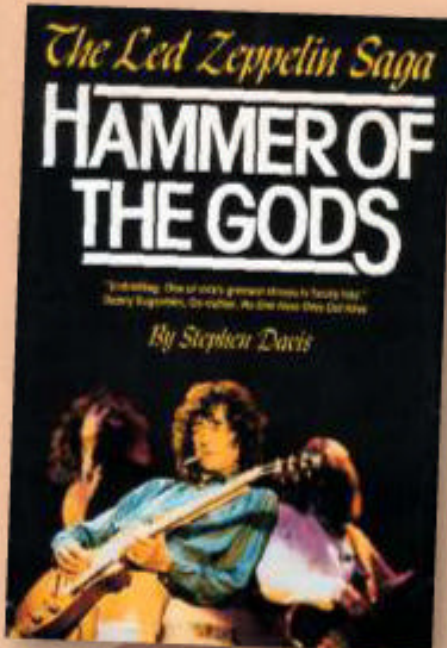
earth-shattering arrival of Zep's debut LP.

Those hoping for sexual misadventure, narcotic excess and satanism with their popcorn are likely to be disappointed. "It concentrates on the most important aspect – the music," says Page.

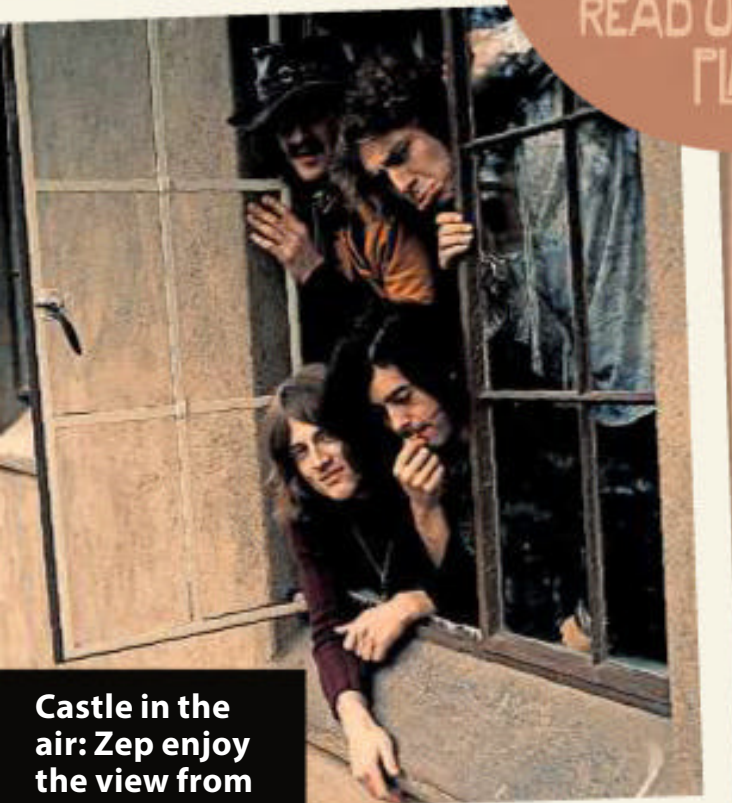
The film-makers trawled basements on an Indiana Jones-style quest for unseen footage, and struck gold with rare live performances and a previously unheard interview with drummer John Bonham. It's an important find, as the film's other talking heads belong to Page, Robert Plant and John Paul

Jones only; no ex-roadies, drug buddies or random lemon-squeezers. Bringing all three to the table to talk on camera is a coup alone. "I don't remember a thing," jokes Plant, "and had to get my copy of [scurrilous Zep biography] *Hammer Of The Gods* out and read up on it."

In that regard, this feels like a band shoring up their legacy. *Becoming Led Zeppelin* finishes after 1969's *Led Zeppelin II*. If that's too soon and leaves much unsaid, it says more than many would have expected.



"I DON'T REMEMBER A THING. I HAD TO GET MY COPY OF HAMMER OF THE GODS OUT AND READ UP ON IT." PLANT



Castle in the air: Zep enjoy the view from the Chateau Marmont, 1969.

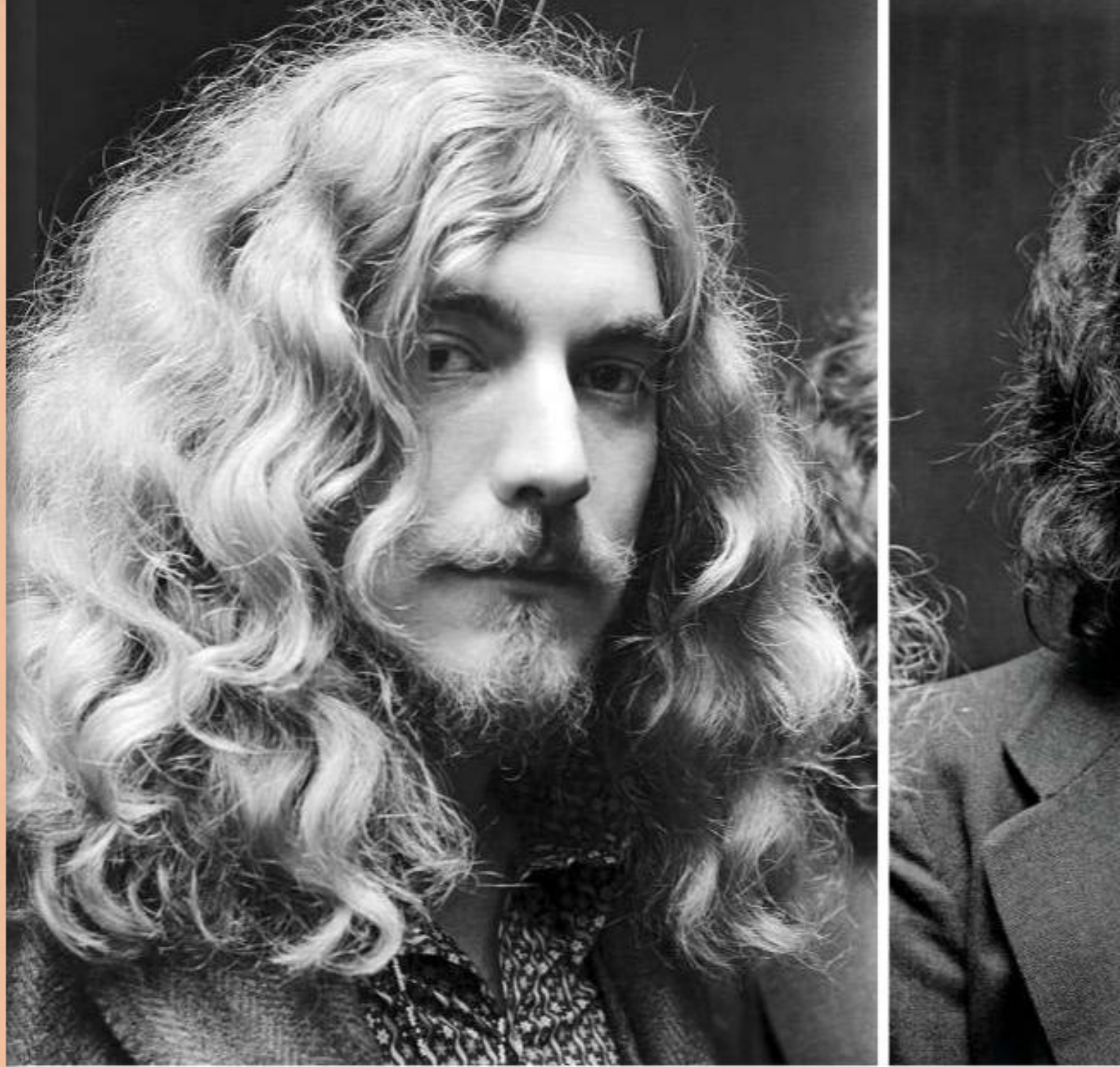
and Plant joined Bonham and Jones at London's Island Studios in December 1970. But the sterile environment didn't suit and Page insisted they move to Headley Grange in the New Year. The former workhouse was now owned by a military family, the Smiths, who rented it out to Farnham art school students and visiting rock bands. "I heard Fleetwood Mac had rehearsed there," recalls Page. "So I presumed if they'd managed to use it, we should be OK."

Page wanted a residential facility where Zeppelin could create without time restraints or complaining neighbours. It was also cheap: "18 guineas per week plus the oil for heating," according to a memo from the time.

Zeppelin, their roadies, engineer Andy Johns and The Rolling Stones' camouflage-painted mobile recording truck arrived in January 1971. However, the Grange's malfunctioning boiler and a typical British winter proved a bad combination.

"Headley Grange was cold, damp, dirty, smelly," groans John Paul Jones. "I remember walking into my room and thinking, Oh really? I had to steal someone else's electric fire."

"Why is John complaining?" asks Page. "We were there to work. I don't want to say anything to embarrass Mrs Smith, the lady in charge. But let's put it this way, Headley was a bit austere. But there was no, 'Oh, let's get stoned or go to the pub and get pissed.' That



wasn't our *raison d'être*. It was 'eat, sleep, work', but at the same time I wasn't walking around with jackboots and a whip," he laughs, perhaps forgetting his reputation for both.

After hours, Zeppelin made their own entertainment. Roadies were sent into Headley village to stock up on cider and Double Diamond, while John Bonham appeared one day wearing country tweeds and brandishing a shotgun, on the hunt for squirrels. The Smith family's black Labrador usually avoided guests but warmed to Led Zeppelin and inspired the title for a new song.

Inside the building, cables snaked from the mobile studio through the baronial hallway into the main living room. Here, an 18th century fireplace was flanked by instruments, including a set of recorders Jones had acquired in New Orleans, and which would make their debut on *Stairway To Heaven*.

The Grange's decrepit upright piano was deemed unplayable, until the Stones' pianist/road manager Ian Stewart turned up and bashed a tune out on it. *Boogie With Stu* would be released on Zeppelin's sixth album, *Physical Graffiti*, along with two more *IV* outtakes, *Night Flight* and *Down By The Seaside*. "Headley Grange was a crucible," marvels Page. "The music was just manifesting."

OVER THE NEXT 12 DAYS, SONGS THAT HADN'T worked at Island came together. One driving, droning new piece had repeatedly taxed Bonham in London. Now he played a perfect take using a pair of drum sticks in each hand, giving the song its title, *Four Sticks*.

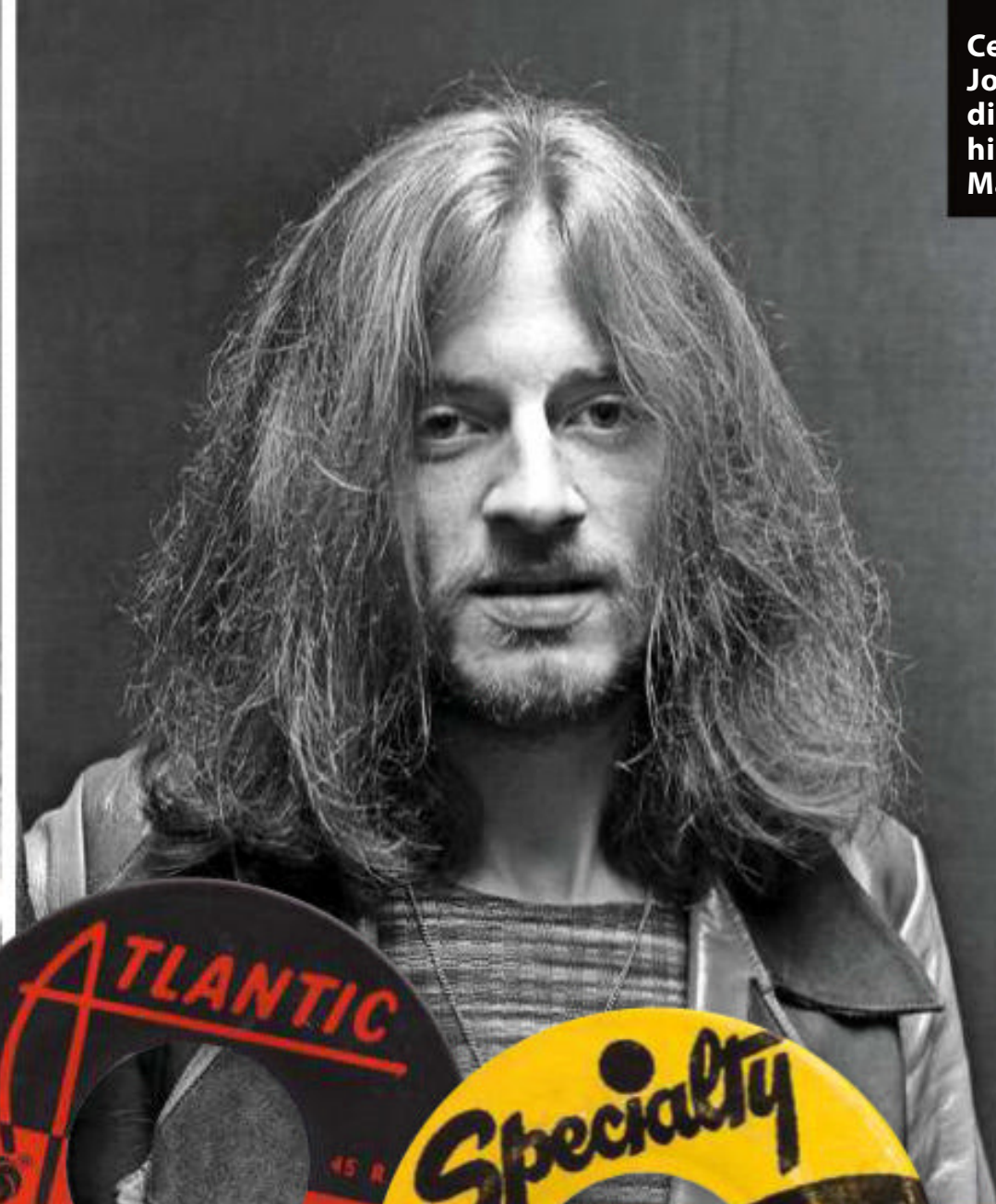
One afternoon, Bonham stopped what he was playing and walloped out the cymbal-driven intro to Little Richard's *Keep A Knockin'* instead. "I started playing along – doing something like the brass riffs on that record," says Page. Plant began scribbling lyrics, and 30 minutes later Led Zeppelin had *Rock And Roll*.

"The red light wasn't on the whole time, but when the music was really far out, you could stay with it for 10 minutes or 10 hours," says Plant.

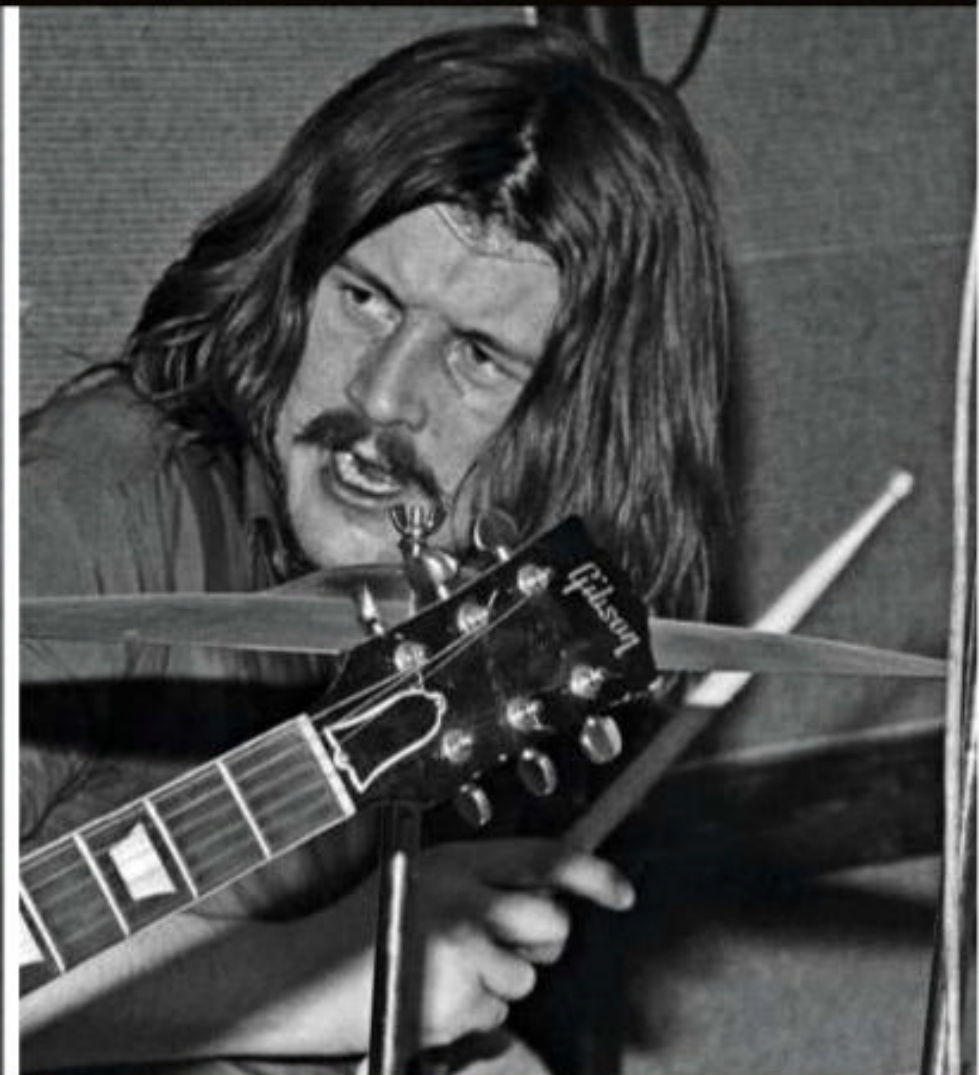
More than previous Led Zeppelin albums, *IV* found a sweet spot between British and American roots music and cultures: Chuck Berry meets Bert Jansch; Alan Lomax meets J.R.R. Tolkien. "I hate to use that awful word 'organic'," says Page. "But boy did it work."

Going To California, Page and Plant's acoustic homage to the West Coast, was created around the living room's log fire. The girl with "love in her eyes and flowers in her hair" who "plays guitar and cries and sings" was supposedly Joni Mitchell. Zeppelin were Joni fans. "She brings tears to my eyes," admitted the usually inscrutable Page in 1975. "What more can I say?"

John Paul Jones added mandolin to the song, having taught him-



Celebration day: (from left) Robert Plant, Jimmy Page and John Paul Jones at London's Savoy Hotel receiving gold discs for *Led Zeppelin III*, October 16, 1970; John Bonham in his hammer-wielding element, Newcastle Mayfair Ballroom, March 18, 1971; (insets) Zep classics and inspirations.



self by playing along to Fairport Convention's *Liege & Lief*. The others shared his appreciation of the British folk rockers. So much so that Plant suggested Fairport's vocalist Sandy Denny for a duet on *The Battle Of Evermore*. "It was a superb idea," says Page.

Denny added her silken voice to a string-driven ballad about "ring-wraiths" and "Avalon" – Plant mixing his Tolkien with his Morte D'Arthur. The Lord Of The Rings author returns to inform parts of *Misty Mountain Hop*, a song voicing the singer's desire to return to the welcoming Welsh hills after the madness of America.

Nowadays Plant has a conflicted relationship with some of his words for Led Zeppelin songs. "My naivety about lyrics came from the fact it takes a long time to grow up when you're on the move so quick. Not many people can look back 50 years and see themselves coming straight at them. Whereas I can see the 22-year-old Robert Plant careering towards me. But at the time it all seemed to fit together naturally."

Jimmy Page is wary of analysing his and Plant's partnership, preferring to talk about a "collective consciousness". Plant, three-and-a-half years his junior, is less reticent. "Jimmy's roots were way ahead of mine. But as young as I might have been, we were moving down the same highway. It was quite mantric the way he wrote, but I could give the whole thing a little twist he didn't have."

Robert Plant takes a deep breath. "I have never experienced, and probably never will, being in the presence of such a great, eloquent player."

LIKE PAGE, JOHN PAUL JONES HAD BEEN A PROLIFIC studio musician in the '60s. He'd joined a group to escape playing 40 sessions a month, only to find himself in the biggest band in the world. "I never quite got the name 'Led Zeppelin' at the beginning, though," he says, "Or 'The Led Zeppelins' as my granny used to call them."

The multi-instrumentalist had accrued co-writing credits on the first three Zeppelin albums – notably, *Good Times Bad Times*, *Whole Lotta Love* and *Since I've Been Loving You*. But he had still

"I DIDN'T WANT ANYONE MAKING A JUDGEMENT BEFORE THEY HEARD THE MUSIC. I WANTED TO PROVE OUR MUSIC WASN'T JUST SELLING BECAUSE OF OUR NAME." PAGE

to assert himself as a composer between Page and Plant. That was to change with key contributions to *IV* that included *Misty Mountain Hop* and *Black Dog*.

"Black Dog's riff came to me on a train back from Jimmy's house in Pangbourne," he recalls. Previously, Jones has claimed the riff was inspired by an unnamed song on Muddy Waters' 1968 LP, *Electric Mud*. He now thinks it came from a Howlin' Wolf record, but can't recall which: "I don't know these things, only how to play the blues."

Page and Bonham heard Jones playing the *Black Dog* riff. "The next question was, 'What are we going to do with this?'" says Page. "So I suggested the call-and-response with Robert's vocal." Page was inspired by something similar on Fleetwood Mac's 1969 single *Oh Well*. "I don't want people thinking it's a rip-off," he urges. "But Fleetwood

Mac had been at Headley, so perhaps their energy came to me."

Plant yoked his libidinous lyric ("Hey, hey Mama!...") to a riff which turned in on itself (4/4 time set against 5/4 time), pulling the listener in two different directions. "We wanted to see people try and move to it," he says.

While the Headley Grange sessions had started well and stayed that way, both Plant and Page cite *When The Levee Breaks* as the moment the album took on a life of its own. Zeppelin had already attempted a version of Kansas Joe McCoy and Memphis Minnie's pre-war blues tune at Island: "The drums didn't really come off though," says Page.

Then Bonham had a new Ludwig kit delivered to Headley Grange and set it up in the hallway. "When we heard Bonzo playing in the hall, with all these reflective surfaces," says Page, "it sounded phenomenal."

Microphones were draped over the stairwell banisters to capture a cataclysmic, three-storey drum sound, suggesting dams breaking

Continues on page 78



All that glitters: Plant with Page's Gibson double-neck at the Prefectural Gymnasium, Hiroshima, September 27, 1972; (opposite) Page and Jones warm up, Manchester, December 7, 1972; Bonham tunes his floor tom, Hiroshima '72.

"I THOUGHT I'D ENTERED THE MOST AMAZING, HYPNOTIC WORLD."

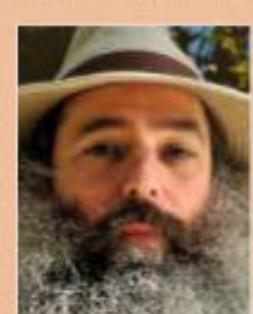
THE EIGHT SONGS OF LED ZEPPELIN IV, BY EIGHT MUSO FANS. AS TOLD TO DANNY ECCLESTON.

SIDE ONE BLACK DOG



Paul Major (Endless Boogie): "The riff is so audacious – it almost makes a mockery of everybody else's riffs. I'm very visual with stuff and to me this song is like a methedrine rollercoaster ride, with traffic lights! The lights are green and the riff starts and you're swerving around like crazy. Then red light, the riff stops and Robert Plant pops up: 'I don't know, but I've been told...' Then the light changes back and you're off on the rollercoaster again! In high school, with me and my friends, this was one of our 'car party' songs. Put on the 8-track, get really stoned, drive out of Louisville. No destination, just turn left, then right, then left, then right, just keep the night goin', rocking to the music. 'Audacious' is really the word for Led Zeppelin. Other bands were trying to be 'true' to the blues – how stupid to think you could ever be that? From the start, for Zeppelin the blues is a rocket platform. And Black Dog is gonna give you whiplash."

ROCK AND ROLL



Ethan Miller (Howlin Rain): "Sheer velocity! A nod to '50s rock'n'roll turned up to nuclear levels. You hear echoes of Jerry Lee and Little Richard as well as a blueprint for future punk blasters like The Damned and Ramones."

On paper there isn't much to it, but once again Zep proves that they can fill almost any vessel with feel, impact, and energy on a grand scale. After Bonham's wink-and-nod reference to his big band jazz roots in the intro, the drums give way to freight train momentum with John Paul Jones pounding out a speeding pulse. Jimmy Page's maniacal guitars swarm like insect-shaped UFOs above a classic buzzsaw riff. Plant's wail sounds like a 10-foot werewolf howling and reeling with animal swagger for blood.

Rock And Roll is a monument to tradition, created and toppled in one heavy blow with speed, danger and animal menace."

THE BATTLE OF EVERMORE



Tori Amos: "OK, so I was eight, and a friend's older sister was obsessed with Led Zeppelin. I'd go over to her house and they'd be playing Led Zeppelin at top volume, smoking (laughs). I just thought I'd entered the most amazing, magical, hypnotic world. I hadn't heard anything like it."

Coming from a church background, there were definitely people around who thought Led Zeppelin were really from the devil, satanic. I was a bit sceptical anyway of the church, and this

didn't help, because when I heard their music, all I could think about was the Goddess. Battle Of Evermore is such a beautiful song – the voices of Robert [Plant] and Sandy [Denny] entwining. I hadn't been exposed to British folk music, so this was just a revelation. The world changed for me with that blending of voices, almost like they were bringing something out of the earth, something ancient. And I just knew in every part of my being that this was goodness, this wouldn't hurt you.

When I got to sing Down By The Seaside [Led Zeppelin IV offcut, released later on *Physical Graffiti*] with Robert [on *Encomium* tribute LP, 1994] my eight-year-old self was spinning in her trainers. He wasn't at all how I thought he would be – he was great at creating a safe place where you could try things; he had that relaxed kind of confidence. My piano works really well in it? I'd been playing their songs in bars since I was 13 – in a baroque style, hardly anyone knowing what I was up to – so it's not like I hadn't been rehearsing for that gig my whole fucking life!"

STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN



Dr Jaz Coleman (Killing Joke): "The first time I heard Stairway? That would have been 1974 at my youth club in Cheltenham. I'd been brought up with hymnal music, church music, and it really resonated with me on that level."

To me it's the ultimate hymn to a golden age. It captures the broken dreams of Zeppelin's generation and has a lot of meaning at this time particularly. In Hindu mythology and cosmology, they say that the time we're in now is the dark age: Kali Yuga. After the dark age will come a golden age. There's lots of occult mythos around this. You can see that this deeply affected the people, the composers, behind this song. I don't think there's a better representation of the group's ambition or the chemistry of the individuals involved.

When I arranged Stairway for symphony orchestra [on 1997's *Kashmir: Symphonic Led Zeppelin*, soon to be reissued with extra Zeppelin

Getty (2), Camera Press (2), Alysse Galkfen, Cheryl Dunn, Pooneh Ghana, Desmond Murray, Raeni Miller

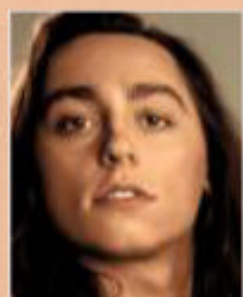


"PLANT'S WAIL SOUNDS LIKE A 10-FOOT WEREWOLF HOWLING AND REELING FOR BLOOD."
ETHAN MILLER ON ROCK AND ROLL



orchestrations] it was quite daunting – the composers were alive, and I knew them! But I really wanted to bring out more of the Celtic flavours and Jimmy was really supportive. Earlier on, when I'd just started scoring for orchestra, he was the only person I knew with a Xerox machine and he'd let me run off all the parts. He's been a mentor to me all along."

SIDE TWO MISTY MOUNTAIN HOP



Jake Kiszka (Greta Van Fleet): "The first time I heard it on the radio it was like a divine intervention. It's so powerful and heavy-hitting, but I also found the lyrics so captivating – that idea of escape to somewhere magical, an escape from a world of rules, from Big Brother. And I'd totally been brought up on J.R.R. Tolkien and The Hobbit so the title really resonated."

Obviously, Led Zeppelin's diversity is defining. And Misty Mountain Hop is kind of unique in their catalogue. The riff itself is very unusual – not what you'd expect a guitarist to come up with. It's using two chords in a very vocal way – it kind of *speaks*. Bonham does this cool half-time thing in the choruses that relieves the aggression of the verses, and I also sense John Paul Jones had a big hand in the arrangement. His Fender Rhodes starts it off, and Jimmy's guitar kind of rips into that. The whole thing just has a savage beauty."

FOUR STICKS



James Petralli (White Denim): "Listening to it the other day, I realised how indebted my entire rhythmic concept is to this tune. It's three bars of five in the verse and a single bar of six. It's the oddest rhythmic construction ever, but it feels really natural. I love that Bonham played it with two sticks in each hand – like

vibraphone sticking – it gives it a kind of tribal feel. And the chorus contrasts the verse so much – the open-tuned acoustic guitars coming in and the out-of-tune synthesizer, it gives the song an insane lift. I feel they must have slowed down the track before they put Robert on it, then brought it back up to speed, because he seems impossibly high, even for Robert Plant! I mean, we covered Custard Pie a few years ago [on MOJO's *Physical Graffiti Redrawn* CD, 2015] and I think I kind of injured myself trying to get up there!"

GOING TO CALIFORNIA



Nancy Wilson (Heart): "In Heart we always used to get called Little Led Zeppelin because we played so many Led Zeppelin songs, and this is one we used to do. It's so full of longing and melancholy: 'Goin' to California with an aching in my heart...' It's California as this Mecca, somewhere where you're not but need to be, where there's a muse waiting for you and she's probably Joni Mitchell. But it's a song of emotional contrasts, because there's danger too – 'I think I might be sinking.' You're trying to get somewhere that's more enlightened and still getting a bloody nose."

Generally, I don't think they get enough credit for this side of what they do. When we'd go and see them in the '70s it was so magical and impressive how they would go from the big bombastic heavy rock song and then pull out some stools and line up at the front and do The Battle Of Evermore or Going To California. They had so much versatility and grace."

Was playing Stairway To Heaven at the Kennedy Center [in 2012] terrifying? Yeah. I mean, playing to the President, the First Lady, and Led Zeppelin? No pressure! And we had only one rehearsal the day before and it was freezing



cold in DC. Waiting around, my hands got frozen and were just not doing what I wanted them to do. The MD was like, 'We'll get you a shadow guitar player,' and I was like, 'No, no, no! I can do this!' For the show I stuck my fingers in my husband's arm pits to warm them up, and I just remember thinking, Don't blow it."

Afterwards, Robert said we did great, and Jimmy said, 'You played that really well.' I was like, 'Oh my God, thank you!' I was so relieved."

WHEN THE LEVEE BREAKS



Patrick Carney (The Black Keys): "My stepmother is only 20 years older than me, and she had a half-brother who is only seven years older than me. He would give me a lot of classic rock tapes, including a copy of *Led Zeppelin IV* on cassette. It didn't have a cover or anything, so this record, which already had a lot of mystique, was kind of even more mysterious to me. And the biggest mystery in a way is When The Levee Breaks, because to this day, among all my friends who drum, there's all kinds of confusion about what the actual drum pattern is. Because there's this cool kind of delay that makes the notes hard to pin down. And I think that epitomises the album – you can't clearly define the drum beat of this song that's kind of *all* about the drum beat."

For me, John Bonham, and Black Sabbath's Bill Ward, they're the Tiger Woods of drumming. You watch them play and it seems so natural and so easy and when you sit down and attempt it it's like, 'What the fuck?!' When I drum it looks like a demon's being expelled from my body, but they're so natural. Take Bonham: he's so technical, but you wouldn't know it because he's so funky. To me, he's the perfect drummer. And I've always taken comfort in that: the greatest drummer has already been and done it. You're never going to get there, so relax!"

BEFORE THE FLOOD

IN SEARCH OF MEMPHIS MINNIE, COMPOSER OF THE ORIGINAL WHEN THE LEVEE BREAKS. YOUR GUIDE: ROBERT GORDON

MEMPHIS MINNIE cut heads, she cut throats, she cut hits. Perhaps not throats, but Robert Johnson's travelling partner Johnny Shines had this to say: "Any men fool with her, she'd go for them right away. She didn't take no foolishness off them. Guitar, pocket-knife, pistol, anything she got her hands on, she'd use it. Memphis Minnie used to be a hell-cat."

Born Lizzie Douglas and raised in rural Mississippi, she was always drawn to the bright lights of Memphis, leaving home for good in 1910 at age 13, establishing herself on Beale Street, home of the blues. She didn't do that uptown Ma Rainey and Mamie Smith orchestrated stuff; she played her six strings like a six shooter. She didn't mind the occasional talented partner, though, and the few times she wanted fuller backing, she'd use the Memphis Jug Band. When a record man heard her and second husband Joe McCoy playing outdoors in 1929, she'd been toughened by two decades on corners and in juke and gin and whore houses, chewing tobacco and answering to 'Kid Douglas'.

Sent with Joe to New York by Columbia Records for their first-ever recording sessions, she was redubbed 'Memphis Minnie' and cut a debut release about a harrowing incident she'd survived less than two years earlier, living with her sister-in-law on the Mississippi River levee in Walls, Mississippi. "The levee did break and we left from there," Ethel Douglas recalled to biographer Beth Garon. "We were scared to death when it broke, 1927." Newly-dubbed 'Kansas Joe' sings their version, but the jaunty, finger-picked lead is all Minnie, an early adopter of the new National Steel resonator guitar. Less of a delta style, she evokes a ragtime, Piedmont blues.

Minnie recorded solo and with Kansas Joe until they divorced around 1935. By then, she'd been drawn to the brighter lights of Chicago, where she was tough enough to challenge the alpha dogs; Big Bill Broonzy wrote about her cutting him in a nightclub contest. When she recorded her biggest hit, *Me And My Chauffeur Blues* in 1941 (later covered by the

Jefferson Airplane on their debut LP), she was already playing electric guitar. Several of her songs have become blues standards, including *Bumble Bee*, *Black Rat Swing*, *Nothing In Rambling* and *In My Girlish Days*.

By the late 1950s, having cut nearly 200 songs over a quarter century, her career was waning and she returned to Memphis, still playing at every opportunity and encouraging a new generation through guest spots on local radio. A stroke in 1960 left her confined to a wheelchair, and she was living in a nursing home, receiving occasional visits from local blues fans, when Led Zeppelin cut their modified version of *Levee*, generating much-needed publishing money for her. She died two years later in 1973.

In a Tutwiler, Mississippi field near the train station where W.C. Handy first heard slide guitar in 1903, Robert Plant told me, "The message of the blues was fortitude, was perseverance and survival. The sounds and the circumstances of these people and these entertainers getting away, making a break, have been part of my spirit. I've got my fingers in the socket."

From Memphis Minnie, the current was direct.

Listen to: Memphis Minnie: *Pickin' The Blues* (Catfish, 2000); Donovan: *Hey Gyp* (Dig The Slowness) (Pye, 1965), adapted from Minnie's *Can I Do It For You*; Mazzy Star: *I'm Sailin'* (cover, on *She Hangs Brightly*, Rough Trade, 1990)

"POCKET-KNIFE, PISTOL, ANYTHING, SHE'D USE IT. MEMPHIS MINNIE USED TO BE A HELL-CAT." JOHNNY SHINES



You gotta move: Memphis Minnie and Kansas Joe McCoy, circa 1930.

Doing the stroll: (from left) Jones, Page, Bonham and Plant, on-stage at the National Stadium, Dublin, March 6, 1971; (opposite) with manager Peter Grant, Hiroshima, September 1971.



◀ and cities swamped. It has been sampled hundreds of times, taking Led Zeppelin into musical realms inconceivable to its members in 1971. And yet, *When The Levee Breaks* is not *Led Zeppelin IV*'s most famous song.

An epic suite that invented a whole genre of rock songs and encapsulated the scale of Page's ambition, *Stairway To Heaven* is the one Led Zeppelin song people who don't know Led Zeppelin know. In 1991, the last time anyone published an official audit, it had been played 2,874,000 times on American radio. Spotify plays number 600 million and rising. But its fame is a double-edged sword.

In the past, Plant has described the song's lyrics as "pompous", and once threatened "to break out in hives" if he ever had to sing it again. He still has misgivings today. In December 2007, Led Zeppelin re-formed with John Bonham's son, Jason, to play London's O2 Arena, with inevitable consequences. Was that the last time Plant sang *Stairway*?

"Yeah. I can't quite remember how it goes," he deadpans. "The bottom line is that song has a been a remarkable milestone in my life. It was an achievement, but where it went from there, to [cover versions by] Rolf Harris to Tiny Tim... to I don't know."

Later, MOJO asks Page if he is similarly conflicted.

"No," he replies, the atmosphere suddenly chillier than John Paul Jones's bedroom at Headley Grange. Page pushes on, preferring to discuss the song's genesis. "I'd had the idea for a guitar-friendly piece for some time. Something with a fragile guitar opening that moved through movements towards a fanfare and a solo."

Jones remembers hearing it as a work in progress. "Jimmy said, 'I've got this thing and it's in different sections.' I sat down at the electric piano and we worked out where everything should go. The joy of it was it didn't sound like anybody else."

Jones thinks the song's working titles included 'Cow And Gate': "Because Robert had recently bought a farm, and so we called him 'Mr Cow And Gate' for a time."

Did the lyrics bother him?

"I didn't pay much attention," Jones admits. "I remember Robert writing some words when we were sitting around the fireplace. We were drinking pint mugs of cider and putting the poker in the fire and plunging it into the cider — like a sword. Robert came up with lyrics then. It sounded mystical and interesting."

"John Paul and I worked on it before getting with John Bonham," continues Page. "A lot of the music



"I'D HAD THE IDEA FOR A GUITAR-FRIENDLY PIECE FOR SOME TIME. SOMETHING WITH A FRAGILE OPENING THAT MOVED TOWARDS A FANFARE AND A SOLO." PAGE



precedes John coming in. It's a slow reveal. But the whole time, Robert was listening and writing. Then he started singing and had most of the lyrics written. He never once said (*adopts whining voice*) 'I can't think of anything for this.' It was an inspired time for *everybody*."

LED ZEPPELIN LEFT HEADLEY GRANGE IN FEBRUARY and completed *IV* at Island Studios. Then Page and Andy Johns took the tapes to Los Angeles' Sunset Sound studios to be mixed. Shortly after arriving, an earthquake shook the city, strong enough to crack the Pacoima Dam in the San Gabriel Mountains.

Mindful of *When The Levee Breaks* and *Going To California*'s lyrics ("Mountains and the canyons start to tremble and shake"), Page took it as a bad omen. The Sunset Sound mix sounded lifeless, and he had to remix the album again in London.

In the meantime, Led Zeppelin embarked on the 'Back To The Clubs' tour around Britain. In a premonition of their 2007 reunion (when an estimated 20 million people tried to acquire 20,000 tickets), demand at bijou venues such as Sutton Coldfield Belfry far outstripped supply.

"Oh, the naivety of it," laughs Plant. "I remember playing to a load of spaced-out beardies with hooked pipes – looking like a bunch of sad Bilbos. Bonzo said, 'What the fuck are we doing?'"

On March 5, 1971, *Stairway To Heaven* was performed for the first time at Belfast's Ulster Hall. Page revisited the venue in September 2016 to be shown a commemorative blue plaque. "It meant so much to me that someone would do that," he sighs.

In spring 1971, however, *Led Zeppelin IV* was still in limbo. Page and their protective mother hen manager Peter Grant had told Zeppelin's label, Atlantic Records, the album would be released without the band's name or a title on the sleeve.

"I didn't want anyone, including Rolling Stone, making a judgement before they heard the music," Page explains, "and I wanted to prove our music wasn't just selling because of our name."

Page remembers butting heads with Atlantic boss Ahmet Ertegun in New York. "Ahmet said, 'You have to have the band's name on the cover,' and told us it would be professional suicide to tour without having an album out. But we weren't backing down."

Instead, they sold out US dates through August and September, and performed songs from the unheard new record. After *Stairway To Heaven* at the LA Forum, the audience gave them a standing ovation. "You know what it's like when you hear a new song from a band and you just want them to play the stuff you know," says Page proudly. "So to see people standing up was moving."

LED ZEPPELIN *IV* ARRIVED ON NOVEMBER 8, 1971. It was a UK Number 1, but just missed the top in America. "Not bad for a pack of Limey lemon-squeezers," allowed Rolling Stone's Lenny Kaye.

Whatever Page's intentions, having an album without a title was a shrewd marketing move. Journalists immediately wanted to know the provenance of the pictures and the mysterious runes inside. The painting of a 19th-century farm labourer with sticks on his back was in fact a serendipitous acquisition; Plant had picked it up in a Reading second-hand emporium when out shopping with Page. Hung on a peeling wall in front of half-demolished terraced houses and a tower block in Winson Green, Birmingham and photographed by Keith Morris, it seemed to represent the struggle between old and new; of rural life subsumed by the modern world.

The gatefold painting inside depicted The Hermit from the Rider Waite tarot deck by an artist credited as 'Barrington Colby M O M'. Some Zeppelin watchers have suggested Colby was a pseudonym for former art student Page. Not so.

"Barrington Coleby [his surname appears to have been misspelt on the album] was a friend of mine from Epsom," explains the guitarist warily. Page had just bought Boleskine House, the former residence of writer and mystic Aleister Crowley on the shores of Loch Ness, and had roped Coleby in.

"He was looking after Boleskine House and I just asked him to do the painting," says Page before suddenly changing the subject. "Did Robert tell you about the man with the sticks?"

Each member of Led Zeppelin also had their own symbol emblazoned on the inside sleeve. Jones and Bonham chose theirs from German type designer Rudolf Koch's *The Book Of Signs*. "Then we discovered Jimmy and Robert had designed their own runes," says Jones. "That whole cover was a Jimmy and Robert production and I didn't quite get it myself."

Today, Plant claims to have found his symbol (a feather inside a circle) in occult author James Churchward's *The Sacred Symbols Of Mu*. "The feather is used in so many cultures though," he notes.

The origins of Page's 'ZoSo' have been linked to Saturn, the rising planet in his star sign of Capricorn, and references to 'Zos' in *The Book of Pleasure* by Crowley protégé Austin Osman Spare. Whatever its source, 'ZoSo' has spent the past 50 years appearing on T-shirts, across the back of denim jackets and, most recently, on the cover of Page's pictorial memoir, *Jimmy Page: The Anthology*. It's now Zeppelin's version of the Nike tick or McDonald's arch.

"It's not something to be questioned or dissected," Page cautions. "Like the album, it was something that was just meant to be. You listened and made up the pictures in your own mind." ➤



Hail to the chiefs: President Barack Obama honours Jones, Plant and Page, Washington DC, December 12, 2012; (below, left) rune reader Aleister Crowley; (right) a courtroom sketch of Plant and Page during the *Stairway To Heaven* lawsuit, 2016.



"I HAVE NEVER EXPERIENCED AND PROBABLY NEVER WILL BEING IN THE PRESENCE OF SUCH A GREAT, ELOQUENT PLAYER AS JIMMY." PLANT



Stairway To Heaven refuses to go quietly. In 2014, Zeppelin faced a multi-million-dollar copyright lawsuit from American psychedelic rockers Spirit, claiming they'd purloined its opening riff from Spirit's 1968 song, *Taurus*. Page, Plant and Jones gave evidence at a federal courthouse in Los Angeles. A jury eventually found in their favour and the case was dismissed.

Page still sounds outraged. "Anyone who knows anything about playing guitar knows some things have been around forever," he huffs. "I wanted to go into court with my guitar and show them the difference, but I wasn't allowed to."

Jones gave his evidence alone. But Page and Plant spent hours together in a court waiting room. "It was surreal," says Plant. "Mobile TV crews, SWAT teams under the building. But at least it gave Jimmy and I the opportunity to talk."

The pair's relationship mirrors that of many of rock's odd couples: musicians in their seventies irrevocably bound to each other by records they made in their youth.

"I've seen a lot more of Jimmy lately," continues Plant. "We recently saw a friend of ours who's not doing so well, and it's like we were the brotherhood again. I'm looking for more events like that."

Will his old bandmates be investigating Plant's new album with Alison Krauss, *Raise The Roof*?

"I'm a bit curious, but I won't buy it," says Jones. "I stream a lot of things but I don't listen to rock'n'roll." Jones's last gig, pre-pandemic, was in the Far East, with Sons Of Chipotle, his experimental project with Finnish cellist Anssi Karttunen.

Page isn't planning a Plant/Krauss listening party either. "I don't use the internet," he claims, "so I haven't got anything to listen on."

Instead, he warms to the subject of youthful American rockers, Greta Van Fleet, a band very familiar with *Led Zeppelin IV*. "OK, they're playing in the spirit of Led Zeppelin," he says, "but what's wrong with that? I'm flattered."

In recent years, Page has remastered Zeppelin's back catalogue. But is there anything left from the fourth album we haven't heard?

"Maybe some of the Sunset Sound mixes," he replies, before laughing. "I may put something in my will to say they can come out on the album's 100th anniversary."

Page spent some of lockdown transferring music made before and after Led Zeppelin from analogue to digital. Naturally, he won't reveal what any of it is, only that "some of it goes back a long way."

His last job was producing his partner, poet Scarlett Sabet's spoken-word album, *Catalyst*, in 2019. But there's been talk of another Page solo record for more than a decade.

"Let's put it this way," he says eventually, "as long as I've got a pulse there's still a chance of another Jimmy Page solo album."

LED ZEPPELIN WOULD RECORD SOME OF THEIR fifth album, *Houses Of The Holy*, at Mick Jagger's Hampshire country pile, Stargroves. They returned to Headley Grange for 1975's *Physical Graffiti*. Only Page stayed at the house. The ivy outside had grown deeper into the walls, the rooms were even colder and Jimmy saw a ghost ("an apparition, a shrouded grey lady") on the top landing. "Did I want to leave? No, no, no."

The new documentary, *Becoming Led Zeppelin*, ends in 1970. In doing so, it captures a more innocent time. If the word 'innocent' could ever be applied to Led Zeppelin.

Yet *Led Zeppelin IV* still feels like it belongs to the calm before the storm. Today, Page thinks it evokes "a liberating time": read, a better time. When Zeppelin broke up, Page struggled in the '80s. "It was the era of videos," he sniffs. "Now you were being shown what you were supposed to think when you heard the records."

"I couldn't get arrested," says Jones. "The only people who asked me to do anything were classical musicians."

The shine had come off Led Zeppelin for Robert Plant before the band dissolved. His young son, Karac, died while they were touring America in 1977. By then, some of the band and its familiars were dabbling in hard drugs. John Bonham's death, after a day's heavy drinking in September 1980, marked the end.

For his first few years as a solo artist, Plant rejected any music which referenced Led Zeppelin's more obvious tropes. "I made some fucking challenging records," he admits. In 1988, however, he sampled Zeppelin riffs, including *Black Dog*, on his album, *Now And Zen*. Since then he's played the song with his own band, giving it a Cajun groove and an Afro beat, depending on the musicians.

"Because that's what we did in Zeppelin," he stresses. "The music was always on the move. Never 'Here's a little ditty and it's gonna have the same lick as all our other songs and Whoop-de-doo!'"

In December 2012, Led Zeppelin received a Kennedy Center Honour for artists who've made a significant contribution to American culture. They attended a ceremony in Washington DC with President Barack Obama. Melodic rockers and Zeppelin acolytes Heart performed *Stairway To Heaven* with Jason Bonham on drums. Heart's big production included an orchestra and a choir dressed in English gentleman-style suits and bowler hats.

It was a cathartic moment, especially for Plant, who was seen wiping away a tear. "I wept because I was seeing that song in a different light," he explains. "I'd been carrying around the passing of John, the passing of my son and the whole '70s whirlwind and where I'd ended up on a personal level. It was an emotional rush."

WHETHER THE PRODUCT OF MUSICAL ALCHEMY, ordered chaos or a magnificent accident, *IV* encapsulates Led Zeppelin's afterlife. The new film proves it's not over yet.

Back in Wales, Robert Plant has just celebrated his 73rd birthday. "And I'm talking to you eight miles from Bron-Yr-Aur in a weather-beaten village – and I belong here," he says wistfully. "When I was growing up, people thought Dirk Bogarde was the man to be when you were old. How ironic that I have become that man on the cover of *Led Zeppelin IV*."

He starts chuckling. "I have some hay bales and twine in the back of the car, and I shall be off to the misty mountains when I am done talking to you."

The sound of a child's laughter punctuates Robert Plant's voice. And then he's gone.

MOJO FILTER

YOUR GUIDE TO THE MONTH'S BEST MUSIC

EDITED BY JENNY BULLEY jenny.bulley@bauermedia.co.uk

CONTENTS

82 ALBUMS

- Diamond geyser: Damon Albarn makes superheated album in Iceland
- Courtney Barnett's unique brand of kitchen sink realism
- Robert Plant & Alison Krauss return
- Curtis Harding's timeless soul
- Plus, Tori Amos, Idles, Endless Boogie, Dean Wareham, Aimee Mann, Elton John, Joan As Police Woman, Joe Bonamassa and more.

96 REISSUES

- Perfect recall: David Crosby's *If I Could Only Remember My Name* expanded
- Ghost twins: Radiohead's *Kid A* and *Amnesiac*
- Nick Cave & The Bad Seeds rarities
- Hello, Goodbye: The Beatles return to *Let It Be*
- Power trash: The Replacements' debut turns 40
- Plus, Fela Kuti, R.E.M., Akiko Yano, Black Francis, Groundhogs, Spiritualized and more.

106 HOW TO BUY

- The many inventions and dimensions of Herbie Hancock.

110 BOOKS

- Celtic soul brother: Bobby Gillespie's memoir
- Plus, Dave Grohl, Tony Wilson, The Sisters Of Mercy and more.

112 SCREEN

- The birth of free jazz, Oasis at Knebworth, Karen Dalton, the Memphis Country Blues Festival and more.

INDEX

Admiral Fallow	90	Galás, Diamanda	104	Pere Ubu	104
Albarn, Damon	82	Groundhogs	104	Plant, Robert and	
Amos, Tori	84	Guided By Voices	84	Krauss, Alison	86
Barnett, Courtney	85	Hamdi, Baligh	104	Pop Group, The	92
Beatles, The	99	Harding, Curtis	88	Portico Quartet	89
Blakey, Art	104	Heartbreakers, The	101	Radiohead	102
Bonomassa, Joe	91	Holcombe, Malcolm	85	Ratcliff, Nathaniel	92
Carter, Frank	84	Hopkins, Jon	87	R.E.M.	98
Cash, Johnny	104	Houndmouth	92	Replacements, The	101
Cave, Nick & The		Idles	85	Rolling Stones, The	105
Bad Seeds	98	Joan As Police Woman	91	Rundle, Emma Ruth	90
Cilker, Margo	90	John, Elton	87	Santana	87
Collier, Graham	105	Konigsberg, Lily	85	Shauf, Andy	92
Come	98	Kuti, Fela	100	Sinephro, Nala	87
Coxon, Graham	87	Light Conductor	92	Sol, Cleo	84
Crookes, Joy	90	Maboul, Aksak	91	Spiritualized	104
Crosby, David	96	Mann, Aimee	87	Strawberry Guy	89
Dawson, Richard	87	Mastodon	90	Tonstarttsbandht	89
Dean, Jamael	89	Modern Nature	92	VA Home In This World	84
Denalane, Joy	98	Nadler, Marissa	92	VA People Get Ready	101
Dion	89	New Age Doom	91	VA Sacred Soul	
Dowe, Brent	101	Nichols, Buffalo	86	Of North Carolina	104
Elbow	86	Nightmares On Wax	89	Wareham, Dean	86
Endless Boogie	86	NOUS	91	Weller, Paul	105
Francis, Black	101	Orquesta Akokán	91	Yano, Akiko	98
FUR	90	Penelope Isles	90	Yova	85

“Both albums twisted machines to Radiohead’s will, to their need to hear soulful songs singing in their wires.”

DANNY ECCLESTON REMEMBERS *KID A* & *MNESIA*. REISSUES, PAGE 102

Fjord Focus

Mesmeric orchestral manoeuvres made in Iceland and Devon, via Montevideo and Iran. By **Tom Doyle**. Illustration by **Borja**.

Damon Albarn



The Nearer The Fountain, More Pure The Stream Flows

TRANSGRESSIVE. CD/DL/LP

DAMON ALBARN insists that he doesn't make solo albums, just ones with his name on the cover. In that sense, this still counts as his second, after the brilliant, slow-burning, mid-life reflections of 2014's *Everyday Robots* – or possibly his third, if one includes the bolder, tricksier Elizabethan shapes of 2012 opera soundtrack *Dr Dee*. Whatever the tally, if for Albarn the former's concept involved "empty club music" and the latter saw him testing his audience with his penchant for lutes and pump organs, *The Nearer The Fountain*... locates a satisfying midpoint somewhere between the two.

In some ways, it marks the full realisation of the English pastoral strain of Albarn's writing that can be traced back to *Last Song*, co-written with and recorded by Marianne Faithfull on her 2004 album *Before The Poison* (and remade by The Good, The Bad & The Queen as *Green Fields* on their self-titled debut in 2007). These 11 tracks sustain a hypnotic mood akin to Robert Wyatt's intimate, existentially searching *Shleep* (1997) or David Sylvian's 1986 ambient double *Gone To Earth*, even if the aural palette features very different shades to either. Here, slow-moving strings and brass, along with glacial pads from the '70s-built Elka Space Organ, sometimes driven along by '50s vintage beatbox, provide sonic backdrops to showcase Albarn's introspective croon.

Originally based in a remit-free commission from Lyon arts festival Fête des Lumières to create a new performance work, the project transmuted into something else after its conception. Initial improvisational sessions took place in Reykjavik pre-pandemic, with Albarn pulling together orchestral players and various trusted collaborators, including The Good, The Bad & The Queen guitarist Simon Tong, live musical director and multi-instrumentalist Mike Smith, and conductor André de Ridder (who first worked with the singer on his 2007 opera, *Monkey: Journey To The West*). The three are all credited with "additional writing".

Inspiration for the musicians came from watching the movements of the clouds and sea outside the studio window. In this setting, Albarn was effectively live-transcribing the weather, and unwittingly pre-empting the global storm soon to come. In *Royal Morning Blue*'s opening lines, he notes the "rain turning into snow", before anticipating a shift "into new realities".

By the time he returned to the Icelandic recordings back in his Devon barn studio, the world had, of course, changed. And so, the lyrics – springing from the title track's updated stanzas from 19th century poet John Clare's *Love And Memory* – became ruminations on mortality, nature, physics



"Never has Albarn sounded so wearily emotional as he does here."

and an overall yearning for "the beautiful past". The death, in April 2020, of his friend and collaborator Tony Allen further focused Albarn's mind on Clare's poem, lines like "To think of the life that did dance on your face" now ringing with added poignancy.

Never has Albarn sounded so wearily emotional and almost broken as he does here amid the twinkling layers of ambience in *The Cormorant*, wherein our narrator is marooned on some unnamed island, envying the freedom of the titular bird, in a dreamlike evocation of the frustrations, worries and, at the same time, welcome stillness of lockdown. By the end of the song, he is picturing, on the far horizon, container ships "full of glass vials".

Stuck, like us all, in one place for months on end, Albarn began to pen an inner travelogue, whether from memory or imagination. The title of the lovely, elegiac *Daft Wader* may have come from a night of drunken shenanigans in Reykjavik (see page 84), but the actual inspiration for its open-ended lyric were the strangely moving funeral rituals that the singer

previously experienced during his travels in Iran, as he witnessed bodies laid out to be returned to nature by feasting birds.

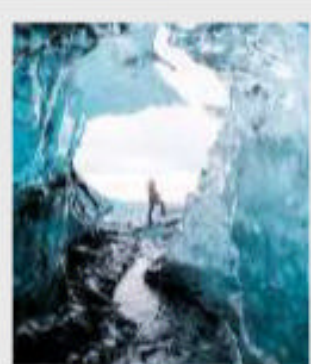
Meanwhile, the ghostly lounge vibes of *The Tower Of Montevideo* find him casting himself as the leader of the house band on an uncharted, spectre-like cruise ship, stopping at various points on the South American coast and discovering abandoned and possibly haunted buildings: "Once there was a cinema/And we had parties." More detail of this imagined scenario is to be found in *The Cormorant*, where music emanates from the bay-anchored liner, "as though the last party on Earth continues".

If that sounds heavy-going, *The Nearer The Fountain*... is no downer, thanks to Albarn's starry-eyed optimism. Sepia-tinted waltz *Darkness To Light*, for instance, takes its cues from '40s and '50s crooners and offers snapshots of grim crisis – "Can you get me to A&E soon, please?/Broken mirror/Carousel of my life." By its chorus, though, it has transformed into a more trad and standard-like "you are my baby" song of devotion.

Musically and melodically, as an album this is a far more artistically indulgent, less obviously inviting proposition than *Everyday Robots*, but massively rewards the listener's patience. It's not without relatively pop-tastic moments: the drum machine pulse and consoling sentiments of the ever-rising *Polaris* remind the listener to seek North Star constancy "if you get blown off course", before erupting with the lava of Mike Smith's sax soloing.

But in its more humanistic and reverie-inducing passages *The Nearer The Fountain*... is truly special. Album closer *Particles* was inspired by a chance conversation Albarn had with an American rabbi on a flight to Iceland, who was travelling there to escape the pandemic but, as the singer remembers, reasoned "that disruption is impossible to maintain... peace always prevails". It sets Albarn's emotive vocal – rising with the line, "I have cried for you darling/ Are coming back to me?" – on a sound bed of Eno-like slo-mo shapeshifting chords. Quietly sanguine and affecting, it argues that a realignment of the natural world cannot be denied.

In that sense, *The Nearer The Fountain*... may prove to be one of the most beautiful, tangentially produced artefacts of our strange and uncertain times. Wherever Albarn goes from here – more Gorillaz music is planned for 2022 and vague, if positive, talk of a return to Blur – as a moment of pause and a statement of hope, it underlines his mastery of whatever musical moods take his fancy.



BACK STORY: ICELANDIC AIR

● Damon Albarn first travelled to Iceland to escape the pressures of Britpop fame in the mid-'90s. Watching TV one day, he saw a programme about the country, with scenes of black sand beaches reminding him of a recurring dream he'd had as a child. Impulsively jumping on a plane alone, his long history with Iceland began. He encouraged the other members of Blur to travel there to record parts of their eponymous 1997 album, later bought a house in a suburb of Reykjavik, and in 2021 was made an Icelandic citizen.

Alamy

DAMON SPEAKS! ALBARN ON POETRY, INNER TRAVEL AND NAKED DANCING.





Damon Albarn: enjoying the view from the window of his mind.

“Then I joined in the naked breakdancing.”

Damon Albarn speaks to Tom Doyle.

The first phase of this record, pre-pandemic in Iceland, involved you looking out at the landscape and the changing weather patterns, and improvising. But later on, some of the songs felt prescient?

“Yeah. Very little was prepared beforehand. It really all just started from looking out the window. You’re staring out at such a vast landscape that is kind of an expression of our environment in every aspect. Y’know, from the brightness of the sun, to the darkness, to the violence and unpredictable nature of when storms come in and you just can’t really gauge how intense the experience is going to be...all of that was just going on. That was the daily soap opera outside the windows. So it’s in this state of flux, and I suppose, in a way that’s so true of where we are.”

Then, in May 2020, you did an online broadcast featuring a few of the songs with different lyrics. Just to air the work-in-progress ideas?

“I don’t know. I mean, no one was thinking particularly straight in May 2020 (*laughs*). But I’m glad that I was afforded all this extra time. Because my lyrics and everything are so much more what I wanted to express now than they were at that point. I benefited from having that huge pause put in my life.”

Why did the John Clare poem Love And Memory speak to you?

“I’ve had a [John Clare] anthology knocking about since I was a teenager. My mum gave me it as a present. So there must have been some point where that line, ‘The nearer the fountain...’ just hit me like a hammer and I’d written it down. I’ve carried that around for a long time. But it was only really after Tony [Allen] died, when I came back to try and articulate what I felt in the songs, that I revisited the poem.”

None of us could travel, so in quite a few of these songs, you’re travelling in your mind...

“Yeah, all over the place. I went to the River Plate to Montevideo to Argentina. I went to Yazd and Shiraz in Iran. And it was really wonderful to do that. Because when I was writing the lyrics, I could spend a couple of days in my head in that place. It was perfect.”

The story behind Daft Waders is that in Iceland you drunkenly tried to get close to these “mad oyster catchers at 3am”. Can you elaborate?

“Well, what preceded that was a party in my house. My mate, Einar Snorri, who is a film-maker and also Iceland’s most famous breakdancer back in the early ‘90s, wanted to demonstrate naked breakdancing. And then I joined in. Then we decided to go and try and get onto the island which is outside the house, because it was very low tide. We put some clothes back on, but we got stuck in the mud and shoes were lost, y’know. So, we were the Daft Waders. But the song is actually about travelling to Iran. I don’t know... I just make it up as I go along most of the time (*laughs*).”



Cleo Sol

★★★★★

Mother

FOREVER LIVING ORIGINALS.
CD/DL/LP

Sault singer blossoms on meditative second album.

On 2020 solo debut, *Rose In The Dark*, west London’s Cleo Sol turned in a superior neo-soul album, while growing her reputation as the singer in the quasi-anonymous Sault. Given the production/co-writing presence of Inflo, *Mother* is virtually a Sault album in all but name, but refrains from their characteristic retro-modernist sonic treatments in favour of a vibe that is far more 1972-74-era Stevie Wonder. Sol became a mother while making the record and writes movingly about the experience, while at the same time looking back at her own upbringing, resulting in the intimations of domestic violence in the gorgeous Carole King-like opener Don’t Let Me Fall, or the forgiving admonishment of a parent amid the Curtis Mayfield shapes of 23. If the result is a slow-grower, filled with multi-movement songs and repeated mantras, then it’s one that further reveals its brilliance with every play.

Tom Doyle



Frank Carter & The Rattlesnakes

★★★★★

Sticky

INTERNATIONAL DEATH CULT.
CD/DL/LP

Ex-Gallows man hoists hardcore punk flag high.



With audible nods to Sleaford Mods, The Prodigy and Carter’s beloved Black Flag, *Sticky* brings pop smarts and razor-sharp riffs, its mood a ferment of bratty intensity. Whether singing about cocaine nights (Bang Bang), “Body parts in wheelie-bins” (My Town), or panic attacks on dates (Cupid’s Arrow), Carter is a snarling, provocative presence who can really sing (see Cobra Queen). Guests include Bobby Gillespie and Idles’ Joe Talbot, but it’s Cassyette, AKA Chelmsford’s Cassy Brooking, who wins the duet gold, bringing extra adrenaline to rumbling bass uppercut Off With His Head. Elsewhere, Go Get A Tattoo is a love-letter to liberally-illustrated man Carter’s former ink shop Rose Of Mercy, but much of *Sticky* is the stuff

of stinging, anti-establishment messaging. Nothing remotely insipid here; rather anger as an energy and top tunes.

James McNair



Guided By Voices

★★★★★

It’s Not Them. It Couldn’t Be Them. It Is Them!

GBV INC. CD/DL/LP

It couldn’t be album 34. It is album number 34!



One corollary of Robert Pollard’s fecund writing compulsion is that if you don’t like one song, there’ll be another along in a jiffy. Still a potent totem for the cult of odd, he’s currently averaging three GBV albums per annum, and this scuzzier accessory to April’s faux rock opera *Earth Man Blues* entrenches the sense that 2021 may be a vintage year. Idiosyncrasy and eccentricity his watchwords, messages always cryptic, voice not without a hint of Michael Stipe, Pollard animates job descriptions less-celebrated (see Maintenance Man Of The Haunted House), reinvents Burt Bacharach on The Bell Gets Out Of The Way, and brings an XTC-ish bloom to the downtempo powerpop of Cherub And The Great Child Actor. “I collect the clouds of morning,” he sings on the latter. And somehow turns them into songs, it seems.

James McNair



Various

★★★

Home In This World: Woody Guthrie’s Dust Bowl Ballads

PARLOPHONE. CD/DL/LP

Game-changing debut album reimaged by modern folkies.



Shining light on the tragedy of 1930s climate refugees, Woody Guthrie’s debut album may be 81 years old but its message is still relevant – it’s just that the

problem is now global rather than confined to the dust bowl Okies of Steinbeck’s *Grapes Of Wrath*. Here, some of Guthrie’s natural musical descendants – Waxahatchee, The Felice Brothers, Colter Wall and Shovels & Rope among them – update the message in sometimes wondrous ways. As is often the case with tribute albums, the further the apple falls from the tree the better: Secret Sisters’ deliver a swamp blues version of Dust Cain’t Kill Me; Lee Ann Womack gives Dusty Old Dust a musicality Guthrie’s voice could never match; and Mark Lanegan and Parker Millsap respectively turn Dust Pneumonia Blues and Vigilante Man into wails of true prowling menace. Exceptional, groundbreaking music that never grows old.

Andy Fyfe



Tori Amos

★★★★★

Ocean To Ocean

DECCA. CD/DL/LP/MC

Amos’s first album since 2017’s Native Invader and her most direct since Little Earthquakes.



Having scrapped an album following the January 6 assault on the US Capitol, Tori Amos crafted a wholly different work. Loosely based around coming to terms with the death of her mother and the relief occasioned by Donald Trump’s departure, the focused, meander-free *Ocean To Ocean* is big on uplift, balm and musical adventure. Subtle electronica underpins both Speaking With Trees and the clattering, hook-laden Metal Water Wood, while the distorted vocals of 29 Years’ verses and the tequila-fixated Devil’s Bane add brittle edge. She’s evolving rather than rebooting, so beyond the peek-a-boo whimsy of Spies, there’s more traditional Amos on the spooked but rather beautiful Swim To New York State and the broken Flowers Burn To Gold (“she had the kindest eyes”), and reassuringly, it’s driven by Amos’s lyrical cauldron, bubbling with analogy, metaphor, anger and hope.

John Aizlewood



Tori Amos: she’s bubbling with anger and hope.

Steve Gullick, Desmond Murray

Slowly but surely

Australian singer-songwriter measures out her life with killer tunes. By **Victoria Segal**.

Courtney Barnett

★★★★★

Things Take Time, Take Time

MARATHON ARTISTS. [CD/DL/LP](#)

THE VIDEO for Before You Gotta Go, a sweet, self-lacerating love song from Courtney Barnett's third album, shows the singer roaming around with a tape machine, field-recording trees, a dog, the sea, her own sprouting head. Since her 2015 debut *Sometimes I Sit And Think, And Sometimes I Just Sit*, Barnett has displayed a gift for picking up the buzz and whirr of everyday life. Her slow-release songs aren't so much ripped from the headlines as rolled from bedsheets or brushed from kitchen counters, her phrasing conversational, her guitar missing a buttonhole or two.

That ability to record what's going on inside and out has unsurprisingly been tested to its fullest extent in the last year. *Things Take Time, Take Time*, written alone in Melbourne, showcases a new kind of sitting and thinking (or just sitting). Windowsills frame Rae Street, a deceptively drowsy snapshot of a suddenly shrunken world, and Here's The Thing's



of hours being eaten up with little to show for them. Self-care bulletin Take It Day By Day offers the consolation "soon you'll be in bed". Days are wished away, nights trundle by. The hope for meaningful change is downgraded to a wry, "I might change my sheets today."

Barnett knows the difference between describing stasis and sounding inert. If these songs initially seem a little underpowered compared with the vivid slacker storytelling of Avant Gardener or Elevator Operator, they soon warm up. There's low-grade hum of frustrated desire, the constant glow of yearning for somewhere – or someone. The sleepy Here's The Scene ends with a letter never sent; other songs – If I Don't Hear From You Tonight or the unashamedly sad

lonely panic ("Looking like I'll never leave this room again"). The album title echoes this unrushed mood, but it also comes with a drag factor, a sense

break-up song Splendour – feel like into-the-void voicemails or empty-chair dialogues. Connections are dropped – closing insomniacs' lullaby Oh The Night wants a lover to "Meet me somewhere in the middle/ On our own time zone". Making a table for somebody (as on Sunfair Sundown) is almost the best thing you can do for a person – provide something solid, something steady.

There are spikier moments – Turning Green's anxious beats, Write A List Of Things To Look Forward To's mordant R.E.M. – but Barnett has resisted the temptation to make a claustrophobic, tightly-bound record. Instead, there's a sunny, open-window brightness to these songs, Stella Mozgawa's production letting light and warmth stream in. "If something were to happen, my dear/I wouldn't want the last words you hear to be unkind," Barnett sings over the Smog-like glint of Before You Gotta Go. For a record about captive states – isolation, anxiety, romantic hope – *Things Take Time, Take Time* knows how to move.

Courtney Barnett, taking her time.

FILTER ALBUMS



Idles

★★★★★

Crawler

PARTISAN. [CD/DL/LP](#)

On fourth LP, Bristol quintet step characteristically out of character.

While the almost parodic assault of 2020's *Ultra Mono* was both a knockout punch and a creative terminus, Idles return energised by a fresh sense of possibility. Their zeal for dismantling the machine is most clearly demonstrated by The Beachland Ballroom, where Joe Talbot reveals his inner Sam Cooke, properly crooning his existential heart out, but also the Massive Attack-overtone opener MTT 420 RR, and shadowy mantra Progress, where interleaved voices beautifully evoke the narrator's bleak self-analysis. Addiction – its motives and consequences – is a recurring

theme, explored with much candour and wit on thrilling glam rackets The Wheel and Crawl! ("God damn I'm feeling good, said the liar to the congregation"), while familiar post-punk doomscape from Bauhaus to Bunnymen get reanimated on When The Lights Come On and motorik monster Meds. Idles are finding new directions home: the hallmark of a great band.

Keith Cameron

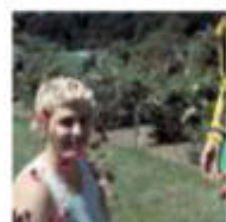
Lily Konigsberg

★★★★★

Lily We Need To Talk Now

WHARF CAT. [CD/DL/LP](#)

Brooklynite's brilliantly skewed indie-pop debut.



it feels like it was crashed out in one perfectly honed blaze of avant-rock/pop glory yesterday. Stuffed with death-defying hooks, Sweat Forever opens on a sunny melody courtesy of a resonant, worn-in 12-string. A long-time love has ended. "I'm still here/Is that what you wanted?" trills

Brooklyn-based Lily Konigsberg has been tweaking this solo debut since 2016, but

Konigsberg in dogged denial. That's The Way I Like It delivers speedy smartass lyrics that spin on a dime, channelling Liz Phair, Aimee Mann or The Breeders' Kim Deal, while staccato guitar serves up shirty Cars/Talking Heads vibes. Don't Be Lazy With Me is astonishing, a languid, whispered alt-jazz plea: "Forget me not, but memorise me still..." And finally, acceptance: closing track True emerges on the other side, a liberated rock-out of piano-soaked vamping. Witty and moving, somewhere an indie movie needs this as a soundtrack.

Glyn Brown

Malcolm Holcombe

★★★★★

Tricks Of The Trade

NEED TO KNOW MUSIC. [CD/DL/LP](#)

Digital reappearance for a 2020 vinyl-only album, with bonus track.



The "Deluxe" edition, it says on the CD sleeve; hardly a word you associate with gritty, straight-talking Malcolm Holcombe. The fold-out pack-

aging full of his drawings is nice and so is the extra song (Windows Of Amsterdam; Mary Gauthier guests), which boosts the tracklist to 13. But if albums sold on quality alone, this would be a bestseller. It's Holcombe's most powerful yet – quite a feat considering his excellent catalogue. A heap of highlights, starting with Money Train, which gives Tom Waits a run for his money, and Misery Loves Company: smart, sing-along classic country of the John Prine kind. Dylan comes to mind too, on some urgent folk-blues. These are songs about greed, delusion and indifference in a country run by con artists (politicians, preachers and the former President), sung in a voice that's dusty and worn, but gruff enough to handle anything.

Sylvie Simmons

Yova

★★★★★

Nine Lives

QUARTERTONE. [CD/DL/LP](#)

Beguiling debut from a duo of sonic adventurers.

Macedonian singer Jova Radevska and writer/instrumentalist Mark Vernon are Yova. Described by Vernon as

"nine different rides on a trip to a sonic adventure park," *Nine Lives* opens strongly with the sparse electronic mystery of Moondog, the pop melancholy of You're The Mirror and Rain, a splendid goth banger if ever there was such a thing, with David Rhodes' guitars evoking John McGeoch's echoey jangle. One time P.J. Harvey producer Vernon has rifled through his address book, providing a strong cast of supporting players such as Rhodes, saxophonist Terry Edwards and drummer Rob Ellis. Would I Change It (If I Could) has Edwards blazing away on his baritone, which hasn't been captured so well in pop since the days of Morphine. Radevska's vocals have the appropriate balance of vulnerability and strength throughout, especially on the touching An Innocent Man.

Daryl Easlea





Alison Krauss and Robert Plant: both inventive and respectful.

Out on the tiles

Fourteen years after *Raising Sand*, the superstar harmony duo return to lofty heights.

By John Mulvey

Robert Plant & Alison Krauss

★★★★★

Raise The Roof

WARNER MUSIC. [CD/DL/LP](#)

MORE THAN most, Robert Plant knows the value of a good myth. In his telling, one suspects, even a trip to the supermarket can become an epic quest across the Welsh Marches. There will be ancient paths retraced, mystical scholarship indulged and, ultimately, redemption – though what Plant returns with might not be what those at home were expecting. He can bring a certain nobility to career choices both capricious and expedient, and romantic gravity to the most pragmatic decisions.

So it is with this second album in the company of Alison Krauss and producer T Bone Burnett, and its artful wrangling of country, folk, blues and R&B into a misty recalibration of Americana. On one level, it can be framed as a spiritually fulfilling passion project, as can anything Plant does that isn't Led Zeppelin. On another, it makes exceptionally good business sense, 2007's *Raising Sand* having sold over a million in the US and 600,000 in the UK alone.

Listening to *Raise The Roof*, the formula still works a treat. While the title might suggest wild times on the old homestead, the revelries are measured. Randy Weeks's Can't Let Go, learned from Lucinda Williams' *Car Wheels On A Gravel Road*, is springy juke joint fare, but there's still something a little

eerie, even Lynchian, about the way Bill Frisell's twanging guitar reverberates in the empty corners. A take on Jimmy Reed's High And Lonesome, meanwhile, replaces blues swagger with mellotron strings and a kind of ceremonial portent that conjures up the menace, if not the exact sound, of Led Zeppelin. It's marvellous.

There's a decent argument to be made that privileging atmospherics and good taste over raw emotion amounts to an evisceration of roots music; that a vaguely uncanny air might not be a proper substitute for lived experience. But then trying to mimic the authenticity of a country blues artist like Geeshie Wiley is more problematic still, and Krauss, to her credit, treats a 1930 nugget like Wiley's Last Kind Words Blues with invention and respect. "Let the buzzards eat me whole," she incants, a model of crystalline poise, while Plant adds understated harmonies, and Stuart Duncan (mandolin) and Marc Ribot (guitar) stalk each other in the background.

Like its predecessor, *Raise The Roof* is skilful at drawing affinities between country and blues. But unlike *Raising Sand*, its sequel expands the remit to fold British folk music into the mix. Plant at his most windswept recasts Anne Briggs' Go Your Way as a restrained epic – listen to how much fun he has stuffing extra syllables into the phrase "Woe is me". And Krauss provides perhaps the album's highlight when she glides through Bert Jansch's It Don't Bother Me, transporting the song from Bunjies Coffee House to an ethereal Appalachia, as the chimes of a marxophone add further silvery mystique. The world it manifests is, perhaps, little more realistic than Middle Earth. But the trick of finding magic in earthy tradition – a speciality of Plant, the old fabulist, for over 50 years – remains as seductive as ever.



Elbow

★★★★★

Flying Dream I

POLYDOR. [CD/DL/LP](#)

More take-offs and landings from reliable musical pilots.

It's always tempting to become a bit blasé about Elbow: here they come again with more lovely romantic sincerity, more late-night poignancy, more gentle experimentation, and expansive pop. If 2019's *Giants Of All Sizes* pushed them further into the bleaker realities of the modern world, Guy Garvey castigating himself as a "Blarney Mantovani/With a lullaby/When the sky is falling in", *Flying Dream I*, recorded at Brighton's pandemic-dark Theatre Royal, sends them back into a gentler bubble. Childhood memories (the title track; Calm And Happy), life-is-beautiful wondering (What Am I Without You; The Seldom Seen Kid's resonant echo) and grown-up declarations of love (The Only Road) set the mood, but Garvey's lyricism is elevated by the subtle complexity of the music, clarinets, choral voices and churchy keyboards whispering through the vents of these songs, causing a quiet stir.

Victoria Segal



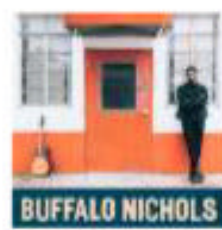
Buffalo Nichols

★★★★★

Buffalo Nichols

FAT POSSUM. [CD/DL/LP/MC](#)

Reclaiming the blues for the angry and dispossessed.



For a genre that once gave voice to the neglected and marginalised, the blues as a social and political force has been underperforming for decades. Austin, Texas-based Carl 'Buffalo' Nichols is on a mission to change that, wrestling it away from electric guitar pyrotechnics and sitting the lives of modern Black Americans back at its heart. Drawing from his childhood growing up in a poor part of Milwaukee, playing in church and extensive European travels, his roots, anger, and pain burrow deep. Although he acknowledges that the blues can be joyful, Nichols isn't in the mood: on Living Hell he sings, "I still go to church but it ain't to save myself, I just like to hear the stories 'bout how you're going to hell", with such conviction you truly fear for his target's soul. Stripped back and raw, his mesmerising

guitar front and centre, this is gritty old-style blues with a laser-sharp modern focus.

Andy Fyfe



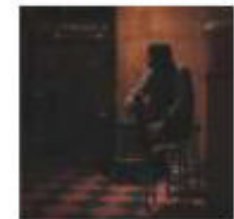
Endless Boogie

★★★★★

Admonitions

NO QUARTER. [CD/DL/LP](#)

Fifth studio set (a double, natch) recorded between Brooklyn and Sweden.



A 22-minute opening track is a statement. With Endless Boogie it's a promise. A

rehearsal band since the mid-'90s, a live entity for 20 years and recording artists since 2008, the Boogie exist in that magical realm where the riff *does* "go on forever", a deep immersive state closer to the physical or spiritual than the intellectual. You feel the music whilst actively *not* thinking about it. This new one, part recorded in Svartsjö, Sweden at the studio of Jacob Sjöholm of trance-rock pioneers Träd, Gräs Och Stenar, moves from a first LP of monumental pin-guid hypo-groovers to a second of fried-amp creepy-crawl sludge and crude-oil ghost harmonics. On drugs, without drugs. They should have this on the NHS.

Andrew Male



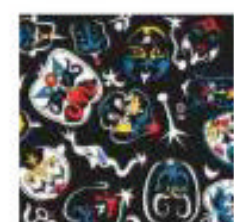
Dean Wareham

★★★★★

I Have Nothing To Say To The Mayor Of LA

DOUBLE FEATURE. [CD/DL/LP](#)

Galaxie 500, Luna and Dean & Britta singer-guitarist's second solo album.



Dean Wareham once described "writer's block" as merely a euphemism for

having nothing to say – hence perhaps his leisurely output during the past 10 years. But this first album of (mostly) original material since 2014 vindicates waiting until you've written something worth hearing. "Tonight I am playing my three-thirty-five/While gazing at your photograph," avers opener The Past Is Our Plaything, Wareham evoking Leonard Cohen and The Velvet Underground, a benchmark example of his literate reverberant guitar constructs. Covers of Scott Walker's Duchess and obscure '60s psych Bostonians Lazy Smoke fit perfectly alongside droll vignettes like Robin & Richard and The Last Word (an elegy for Karl Marx's daughter Eleanor), while vaporous closer Why Are We In Vietnam has Wareham's long-lost falsetto despairing of the humble artist's lot in the face of geo-political madness. For erudite wit and dream tuneage, you won't find better.

Keith Cameron

Aimee Mann

★★★★

Queens Of The Summer Hotel

SUPEREGO. [CD/DL/LP](#)

Music to stage adaptation of *Girl, Interrupted* and 10th LP by peerless singer-songwriter.



Susanna Kay-sen's 1993 memoir, *Girl, Interrupted*, an account of her late-'60s hospitalisation with borderline personality disorder, was first adapted in a 1999 film starring Winona Ryder. Directed by James Mangold, the movie inhabits a shifting nebulous space between sanity and madness, order and chaos, a landscape not dissimilar from that charted in Aimee Mann's own writing career, most recently on her Grammy-winning 2017 LP, unambiguously titled *Mental Illness*. For this stage adaptation of *Girl, Interrupted*, Mann is working with Paul Bryan's string arrangements, triple-time waltz patterns and narrative rhythms somewhere between classical lieder and the modern recitative. As such, the delivery can often feel eerily dreamlike or hauntingly disconnected. Mann's voice remains exquisite, her lyrics cinematically vivid, often painfully so, but the album possesses a chimerical looseness, a fuzzy aimless drift that is simultaneously haunting and somniferous.

Andrew Male



Elton John

★★★★★

The Lockdown Sessions

EMI UNIVERSAL. [CD/DL/LP/MC](#)

Ten new and six recent collaborations provide an impish delight.

Never likely to sit twiddling his thumbs when his Farewell Yellow Brick Road tour halted, Elton John ignored an album's worth of new Bernie Taupin lyrics to work from home, collaborating with wildly diverse artists, from the Stevies (Wonder and Nicks) to Miley Cyrus and Lil Nas X. The result is probably his most varied album. There's the walloping ballad *After All* with John's Los Angeles neighbour Charlie Puth; there's *E-Ticket*, where John and Eddie Vedder rock out to evoke Saturday Night's *Alright (For Fighting)*, and there's a deliriously unhinged take on *It's A Sin* with Years & Years, which begins in Ally McBeal fashion, before

ascending into Hazell Dean giddiness. The extremes work better still, be it Cyrus's eyebrow-raisingly raw trawl through Metallica's *Nothing Else Matters* or the vocal and piano pyrotechnics which course through Young Thug & Nicki Minaj's *Always Love You*.

John Aizlewood



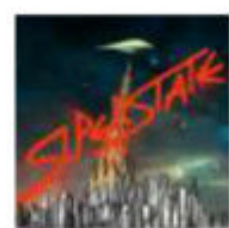
Graham Coxon

★★★★

Superstate.

GRAHAM COXON. [CD/DL/LP](#)

Blur guitarist records soundtrack for his own sci-fi comic book.



Considering his initially sniffy reaction to Gorillaz, it is perhaps ironic that Graham Coxon's new album is a soundtrack to his own graphic novel, *Superstate*. Given the marriage of cartoons and concept (and the brace of guest artists involved), it's hard not to draw comparisons with his Blur partner's more star-studded project. Indeed, there's plenty here that would happily fit onto any Gorillaz album – the glorious, funkadelic splurge of *It's All In Your Mind* and *Only Takes A Stranger's Studio 54* strut to name but two. It's an ambitious set and surprisingly light on his trademark, scruffy guitar doodling, but at one hour 20 minutes *Superstate* can drag. Which is a shame, as two of its best moments come at the end: the melancholic *We Remain* channels Coxon's

inner Bowie to magnificent effect, while *Listen* is a Jason Pierce-level cosmos-bound sci-fi lullaby.

Chris Catchpole



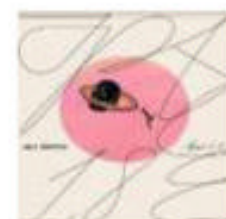
Nala Sinephro

★★★★★

Space 1.8

WARP. [DL/LP](#)

The London jazz revival moves into ambient phase.



The reputation of Alice Coltrane is so justifiably imposing it can be hard to consider other jazz harpists without drawing comparisons. Caribbean-Belgian newcomer Nala Sinephro is striking, however, in finding a rather different route to the transcendent. On her solo debut, Sinephro's harp playing tends toward the minimal and spectral rather than to cosmic flurries, blending with her equally subtle synths. Sometimes, the elements coalesce into a quasi-ambient remodelling of the current London jazz sound: Nubya Garcia is at her most nuanced on the small hours *étude* of *Space 4*, the album's most conventional highlight. But it's the way these sessions are gracefully processed into digitalia that makes the whole thing so cohesive, even as the concluding *Space 8*, a 17-minute excursion with saxophonist Ahnansé, ventures into the muggy Fourth World zones mapped out by Eno and Jon Hassell.

John Mulvey



Richard Dawson & Circle

★★★★★

Henki

WEIRD WORLD. [CD/DL/LP](#)

The best folk/metal concept album about seven special plants you'll hear all year.

Richard Dawson's long-distance love affair with Finnish experimental rock band Circle has come to glorious fruition in the most fully realised record of his career to date. Balancing the self-contained third-person narratives of panoramic predecessor *2020* with Dawson's developing penchant (through his sometimes mystifying spin-off electropop endeavours with Hen Ogledd and collaboration with Pigs Pigs Pigs Pigs Pigs) for integrating his idiosyncratic talents into a full band scenario, it's an album of stunning power and range. From *Silphium's* 12-minute eco-prog rhapsody (how else to detail the search for an elusive aphrodisiac of the fennel family?) to the full metal screech of *Methuselah*, it routinely achieves a perfect fusion of form and content. *Henki* is likely to prove equally

irresistible to fans of Opeth, The Watsons and These New Puritans' *Field Of Reeds*, and a life-changing event for those with a yen for all three.

Ben Thompson



Santana

★★★★★

Blessings And Miracles

BMG. [CD/DL/LP](#)

Latin axe god still rocking with his band's wildly eclectic 26th album.



Twenty-two years have passed since Santana's *Supernatural* album went multi-platinum and miraculously revived a career that was seemingly heading for oblivion. A key collaborator on that landmark release was Matchbox Twenty singer Rob Thomas, who returns on the new set's lead single, *Move*, a blistering collision of heavy rock and Latin pop. The remainder of the album ranges from percussive jazz-rock (*Santana Celebration*) and bouncy Latin techno (*Rumbalero*) to febrile thrash metal (*America For Sale*); the latter, featuring Death Angel singer Mark Osegueda, finds Santana trading licks in an explosive guitar duel with Metallica's Kurt Hammett. Elsewhere, Steve Winwood fronts a dreamy remodelling of Procol Harum's iconic *A Whiter Shade Of Pale* while the late Chick Corea brings a cool jazz piano vibe to *Angel Choir/All Together*.

Charles Waring

Jon Hopkins

★★★★★

Music For Psychedelic Therapy

DOMINO. [DL/CD/LP](#)

Techno maven recalibrates with pace-changing South American trip.

IMMERSIVE, CinemaScope techno has made Jon Hopkins one of the genre's most popular proponents. And perhaps explains why he's hit the reset button with *Music For Psychedelic Therapy*. Inspired by and containing sounds from a trip to Ecuadorean caves in 2018, it's in sync with the rhythms of nature rather than the rhythm of the dancefloor. Notionally a collection of songs, in effect it's a continuous, slow-moving, hypnotic suite. Entirely beatless, it's a place where drone, ambient and classical fuse and float away. Rare moments of tumult are quickly doused by beautiful noise. Glowing



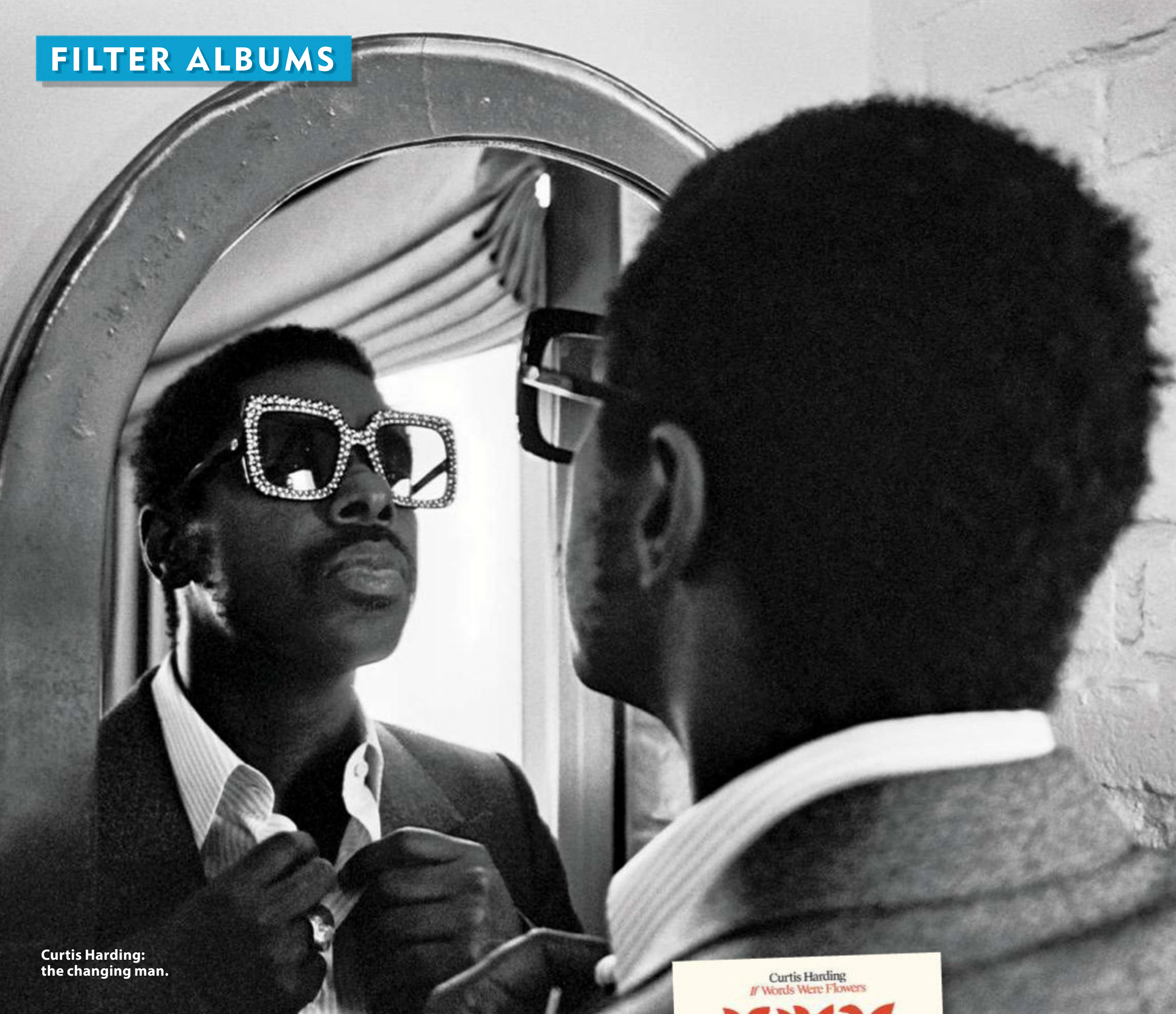
Jon Hopkins:
dancing to the
rhythm of nature.



synth pads, avian chatter, a rainstorm, the crackle of fire are gently applied. Hopkins, a proponent of the benefits of psychedelics, recommends consuming the album

while prone, in the dark and using lysergic accompaniment. That's impractical for most, but even when consumed straight, it's music that's soothing and transportive.

Stephen Worthy



Curtis Harding:
the changing man.

About blooming time

Soul revivalist's powerful third slips between eras to bear witness on the present. By **Stevie Chick**.

Curtis Harding

★★★★★

If Words Were Flowers

ANTI- CD/DL/LP

THE BLACK-and-white video for his recent single *Hopeful* depicts Michigan-born, Atlanta-based singer/songwriter Curtis Harding accessorising his vintage polyester duds with a Covid mask. He slides behind the wheel of a late-'60s Chevy Nova 350 and drives past murals dedicated to the late civil rights activist John Lewis, on to a parking lot where he delivers his gospel to a simmering Black Lives Matter protest.

The clip's blurring of eras is an act of deliberate anachronism. It infers that we've not progressed from 50 years ago, that a continuum of oppression, violence and hatred

still prevails – but also, more optimistically, that the spirit to resist, by any means necessary, is equally inextinguishable. The video serves as a smart metaphor for the magic Harding works throughout his third album: *If Words Were Flowers* is firmly rooted in the sound of classic soul but speaking clearly and from the heart to everything that's happening right now.

Harding and right-hand man Sam Cohen – also a regular collaborator with Danger Mouse, who co-produced Harding's previous LP, 2017's *Face Your Fear* – ensure the period detail is on point throughout. Bristling tambourines urge forward the insurgent Motown choruses of *Can't Hide It*, while *Hopeful*'s horn-rimmed slow-burn gives way to a fuzz-soaked guitar solo worthy of Ernie Isley at his lysergic peak, and the hard-edged groove of *Where Is The Love?* could have slipped off a dusty Stax 45.

The fluidity with which Harding slips between eras is audacious – he's clearly immersed in classic soul, but he won't be defined by the past. It's a point underscored



by *So Low*, one of the LP's highlights, where the downbeat flute funk is disrupted by the very 21st century vocoder effects Harding feeds his vocals through. Such moments of rupture are Harding breaking the fourth wall, reminding

us that for all his vintage window dressing, he is singing of the world of Trump, of Covid, of George Floyd, the world outside *our* window.

A deft lyricist, his words are subtle but certain, his ballads haunting, his protest songs never preachy or cloying. *So Low* is the bleak standout, a modern-day refit of Gil Scott-Heron's *Home Is Where The Hatred Is*, a song of addiction and regret that struggles to resolve the conundrum, "Why do I get down, just to get high?" The anthemic *Hopeful*, meanwhile, grounds its optimism in a poetic rendering of the "present darkness", all monotonous storms and war-ridden skies. Still, his message – bolstered by gospel choir, breakbeats, brass and that guitar solo – transcends the melee with its promise "Not to pacify you but, homie, to truly change." It's a powerful moment, the very currency Curtis Harding deals in throughout this stirring, seductive album.

Dion

★★★★

Stomping Ground

KTBA. [CD/DL/LP](#)

After *Blues With Friends*, Dion calls on even more pals: all fellow rock legends.



Dion DiMucci has called his 1961 classic *The Wanderer* “black music filtered through an Italian neighbourhood.” His deep dig of hard blues gave him an edge. At 82, Dion still has powerhouse vocal chops and a marquee fan club of fellow rock stars. Bruce Springsteen, Eric Clapton, Peter Dinklage, Billy Gibbons, Rickie Lee Jones and more have joined him for this follow-up to last year’s similar *Blues With Friends*. The songs have intriguing lyrical themes, including a tribute to Dr. John and what appears to be a street-tough stand against cancel culture. (Don’t mess with anyone from The Bronx.) The most successful tracks, like the Latin-tinged *Dancing Girl* with tasty guitar from Mark Knopfler, vary from the pervasive blues-rock formula. A little more sonic danger may have roughed-up the pristine veneer that dampens the fun.

Michael Simmons



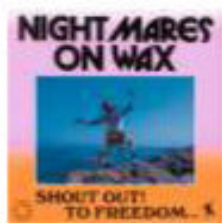
Nightmares On Wax

★★★★

Shout Out! To Freedom...

WARP. [CD/DL/LP](#)

A brush with mortality inspires guest-laden psych-soul suite by Warp stalwart.



A cancer scare forced George Evelyn, Warp’s longest-serving if least heralded act, to stop, take stock and listen to his inner voice as he hung up his DJ headphones in early 2020. The man who went from bleep to bong in the mid-’90s digs much deeper here, combining his mastery of late-night hip-hop grooves with unhurried electronica, jazz and dub, the soulful

murmurs of Haile Supreme glueing it all together. Whether coaxing tender, melodic sax turns from Shabaka Hutchings (Wonder’s Balearic sunrise vibes), witnessing Washington DC rap Afro-futurists OSHUN manifest their destiny (*Breathe In*) or letting the pulse drop for Greentea Peng to ride languid steel drums (*Wikid Satellites*), its class is unmistakable, surpassing even the low-slung gait of 1995’s previous career milestone *Smokers Delight*.

Andy Cowan



Portico Quartet

★★★★

Monument

GONDWANA. [CD/DL/LP](#)

Second LP in six months captures four-piece at their most direct.

Having leaned deep into the ambient textures underpinning their work on minimalist three-parter *Terrain*, the precisely chiselled *Monument* is a less amorphous and abstract reassertion of Portico Quartet’s core strengths. Recorded in the same sessions but seemingly beamed in from different planets, the overlapping electronic keys and propulsive drums of Impressions and Krautrock-edged Ultraviolet dodge the snoozy rabbit-holes of old for something streamlined and direct. They show their range on AOE, cello, sax and synths flickering in and out of a skittering rhythmic chassis, while Warm Data’s creeping transitions and swirling atmospherics (ghostly voices permeate throughout) scale new haunted heights. Ultimately, it’s the push and pull between Duncan Bellamy’s mantric hang-drums and Jack Wyllie’s floating sax lines that ensure these widescreen creations feel so vividly full of life.

Andy Cowan

Strawberry Guy

★★★★

Sun Outside My Window

MELODIC. [CD/DL/LP](#)

Wistful, upbeat one-man-band and online star’s first LP does not disappoint.



Sun Outside My Window is the first full-length album by Soundcloud/streaming

superstar Alex Stephens, the Strawberry Guy himself. Some-time Orielles keyboard player Stephens grew his fanbase online, with his ornate, spectral sound. Mrs Magic from 2019, has, at the time of writing, been streamed 44 million times, with thousands of fan videos being created. It comes as little surprise that Stephens is based in Liverpool, as *Sun Outside My Window* is a perfect continuation of the dream pop of Black, China Crisis and The Lightning Seeds. In a world where everything seems such an acute reflection of influences, *Sun Outside My Window* is something quite special. For a one-person ensemble, Stephens’ arrangements are often outstanding, utilising the studio as an instrument; *Back On My Feet*, an optimistic rally for a new future, is one of the album’s many sweet spots.

Daryl Easlea



Tonstartssbandht

★★★★

Petunia

MEXICAN SUMMER. [CD/DL/LP](#)

All change for kosmische-leaning siblings’ sublime 18th album.



Brothers Edwin (drums) and Andy White (guitar) are legends of the underground; forgers of umpteen studio and live albums since 2008, masters of experimental pop, but also extended improv, sharing (surprisingly good) vocals as they go. They’ve mixed things up with *Petunia*, the result of both living in Orlando after years in different states (they’d typically record on tour), with time to finesse and relax, no longer “Always so focused on leaving/No time left to return,” as Hey Bad’s stellar psych-boogie puts it. The outcome is a calmer, Laurel Canyon-esque vibe than their typically scuffed, fuzzy output. There are shorter tracks, but the longer songs (averaging seven minutes apiece) are the real gems, especially *Falloff*, where Andy’s 12-string electric guitar emanates sparks of trebly sunlight, and *What Has Happened*, where the percolating sequencers and the brothers’ dreamy falsetto vocals unfurl an aura of blissful contemplation.

Martin Aston



Nightmares On Wax: supreme highness.

JAZZ

BY ANDY COWAN



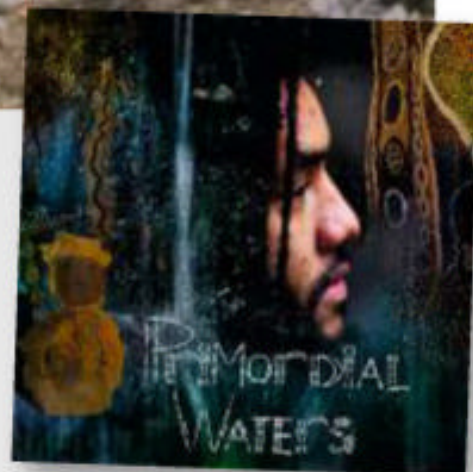
Jamael Dean

★★★★

Primordial Waters

STONES THROW. [DL/LP](#)

Los Angeles’ pianist’s sprawling full debut explores the Yoruba creation story and much more.



CLOCKING IN just shy of 100 minutes, there’s much to unpack on this future-facing sweep through the spiritual jazz cosmos from the 22-year-old grandson of Les McCann drummer Donald Dean. Traditional Orisha and Yoruba stories guide highlights *Akoda* and *Overstood* – Sharada Shashidhar’s wordless coos, Carlos Niño’s pattering percussion and Jamael Dean’s loose, fluttering harmonics allowing saxophonist and trombonist Zekkereya El-Magharbel to build a head of steam – while the massed brass outer-space feel of *Galaxy In Leimert* nods to *Galaxy Around Olodumare* by Alice Coltrane (a touchstone throughout). Having displayed estimable instrumental chops, the final third morphs into a leftfield jazz-rap set that illuminates the catch and crackle of Dean’s grits-and-gravy voice. That may split the jury, but there’s no denying his prodigious talent or unwavering ambition.

ALSO RELEASED

Irreversible Entanglements

★★★★

Open The Gates

INTERNATIONAL ANTHEM. [DL/LP](#)



“It’s energy time!” declares Camae Ayewa. The tempered fury of her poetic protests punctuate the busy storm of this radical US free jazz collective’s third LP. Recorded in a day, Keir Neuringer and Aquiles Navarro’s writhing horns and atonal melodies combine with Luke Stewart’s walking bass lines and Tcheser Holmes’s rumbling percussion to create a liberating 73-minute sprawl, constantly blurring the lines between euphony and cacophony.

Matthias Lindermayr Trio

★★★★

Triptych

SQUAMA RECORDINGS. [DL/LP](#)



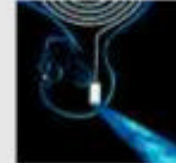
Triptych marks Matthias Lindermayr as a unique voice. As mysterious as it is meditative, this Munich trumpeter’s bravura three-way with acoustic guitarist Philipp Schiepek and minimalist percussionist Simon Popp reveals a breath-like purity to his fragile and beguiling tone. Packed with surprises (the short, punchy *Simmering*, otherworldly February 19th), the melodies may be relatively simple, but the execution is pinpoint, the magnetism undeniable.

Theon Cross

★★★★

Intra-I

NEW SOIL. [CD/DL/LP](#)



The Sons Of Kemet star paints on a much broader canvas here than 2019’s debut *Fyah*, roving roughshod across genres. Less self-consciously jazz than his debut, whether applying his lingering melodic skills to future-funk (*We Go Again*), mutated ska (*Forward Progression*), spiritual grime (*Roots*) or letting low-end theories bisect bustling paths of rhythm in tandem with Oren Marshall (*Universal Alignment*), in Cross’s seasoned palms the tuba’s possibilities feel endless.

Malcolm Jiyane Tree-O

★★★★

UMDALI

MUSHROOM HOUR HALF HOUR. [DL/LP](#)



Written to commemorate two deaths and a birth, Jiyane (pianist with open-ended South African improvisors SPAZA) unspools five roomy compositions that spotlight his tender trombone talents alongside saxophonist Nhlanhla Mahlangu and trumpeters Brandon Ruiter and Tebogo Seitei. Whether riffing off Herbie Hancock’s *Ostinato* or hymning late bassist Senzo Nxumalo and mentor Jonas Gwangwa, *UMDALI*’s mellow ebb and flow unleashes a potent melodic balm. AC



Admiral Fallow

★★★★★

The Idea Of You

CHEMICAL UNDERGROUND. [CD/DL/LP](#)

Long-gestating fourth LP, former Delgados drummer Paul Savage again produces.

If Glasgow's Admiral Fallow aren't the most prolific, it's understandable. The kind of intricate mosaic that takes time to map and mix, *The Idea Of You* sounds labour intensive in the best sense, its evolving, detailed arrangements taking in Sufjan Stevens-like woodwind, elements of Philly soul, angular '80s pop and more. The moody, hypnotic Tuesday Grey, with its almost Police-like chorus, teems with carefully marshalled invention, while The Grand National, 1993, knee-deep in frontman Louis Abbott's usual lyrical intrigue, builds to the most exquisitely laid-back chorus, its groove sublime. A tiptoe stretch for excellence is similarly apparent on opening ballad Sleepwalking, all charm and intimacy. Make no mistake: *The Idea Of You* is a stealthy landmark; a Chemical Underground record up there with The Delgados' *The Great Eastern* or Arab Strap's *Elephant Shoe*.

James McNair

Emma Ruth Rundle

★★★★★

Engine Of Hell

SARGENT HOUSE. [CD/DL/LP](#)

Versatile alt-rockers prove just as potent in spartan, piano-based mode.



Formerly guitarist for post-rockers Red Sparowes (sic) and Marriages, since 2011 Emma Ruth Rundle has charted an eclectic path through electrifying, folk-inflected rock, ambient experimentalism and a senses-stunning collaboration with doom metallers Thou. *Engine Of Hell* sees the Californian singer-songwriter ditch her signature expansive arrangements for an eight-song set of piano-framed ballads that dig deep into youthful memories. This newfound instrumental austerity can be forbidding at first, but repeated spins reveal lyrically acute portraits of grieving a family member during childhood (Body); a loved one battling addiction (Blooms Of Oblivion, cut with acoustic guitar and violin); and, less ominously, enjoying music with a friend (Dancing Man). Rundle has written movingly on social media of struggling with pandemic enforced isolation, and the quietly majestic Return, with its poetic allusions to loss and loneliness, will resonate with many who have felt the same.

Manish Agarwal



FUR

★★★★★

When You Walk Away

777. [CD/DL/LP](#)

Brighton indie quartet's debut, the sound of "Roll necks and layered guitars".

Three of FUR took various music courses at the same university and on this evidence they must have breezed through both the history and songwriting units. Vocalist/rhythm guitarist Will Murray admits he finds "the most inspiration in looking back", but the zip-fresh feel and persistent hooks spin new dreams from old, with the ability to change shape without sounding like dilettantes, plus the occasional surprise. When You Walk Away Pt I and The Fine Line Of A Quiet Life are clearly indebted to The Strokes, but at heart FUR are powerpop disciples of the holy trinity of Beatles/Beach Boys/Byrds. Rockers such as Wild Heart and the ballad Holding Up The Sun make those harmony-laden connections plain. But to prove their versatility, No Good For You taps Buddy Holly and The Everly Brothers instead.

Martin Aston

Mastodon

★★★★★

Hushed And Grim

REPRISE. [CD/DL/LP](#)

Atlantan heavies deliver their weightiest, most majestic opus yet.

Given the titanic nature of their riffs, the grandness of their vision, it's entirely fitting that Mastodon's eighth album – their first double – closes with a track entitled Gigan-tium. But if "more is more" remains a governing principle, the sound and fury resonate. Having successfully cross-pollinated their gnarly thrash with prog and classic rock on 2009 masterpiece *Crack The Sky*, *Hushed And Grim* is Mastodon's first album since then to so effectively ally their technical flash to emotive power. There's considerable ambition at play here: Eyes Of Serpents is a windswept epic scored by passages of heroic, eloquent slide-guitar, while the sprawling Peace And Tranquility see-saws brilliantly between hyper-ornate savagery and passages of graceful tenderness. And – perhaps the surest evidence of Mastodon's status as worthy



heirs to metal's throne – Had It All plays Metallica's Nothing Else Matters at its own power-ballad game, and wins.

Stevie Chick



Penelope Isles

★★★★★

Which Way To Happy

BELLA UNION. [CD/DL/LP](#)

Content providers: Brighton siblings seek answers on second LP.



Wistfulness and melancholia are hardly alien states in pop music, but Jack and Lily

Wolter balance the bitter and the sweet with real delicacy on the follow-up to their 2019 debut *Until The Tide Creeps In*. Mixed by Dave Fridmann, *Which Way To Happy* sometimes comes with the cosmic boom of The Flaming Lips or Mercury Rev (Have You Heard; Miss Moon) but a music-box intricacy keeps these anxious, wondering songs on a room-sized scale even as they worry at the big issues over strings and keyboards. "Throw me a rope down here," sings Lily on 11 11, "Are there pills for how I feel?", while both MGMT and Tanya Donelly would be pleased with Play It Cool. An endearing mixture of emotional wobble and creative confidence, *Which Way To Happy* is – artistically, anyway – on exactly the right track.

Victoria Segal



Joy Crookes

★★★★★

Skin

INSANITY. [CD/DL/LP](#)

Immersive debut from the 22-year-old Bangladeshi-Irish south Londoner.



Joy Crookes was raised on Sarah Vaughan, Dinah Washington and Ella Fitzgerald

records and her raspy vocal is perfect for low-lit smoke-filled jazz establishments. As such, she has earned comparisons to Amy Winehouse and, like Amy, she speaks her mind, her songs traversing identity, familial love, civil rights and relationship power struggles are delivered with a fierce honesty and intensity. "I'm not your lover, I'm just for Friday nights," she sings matter-of-factly on I Don't Mind, a hazy layering of beats, strings and horns, played by a brass section plied with whisky so they sound drunk. Elsewhere, on the Nina Simone-styled ballad Power, she declares defiantly, "I don't need your permission." Recorded in Abbey Road with co-producer Blue May, *Skin* takes in soul, jazz and trip-hop, and more than fulfils her early promise.

Lois Wilson

Margo Cilker

★★★★★

Pohorylle

LOOSE. [CD/DL/LP](#)

From Oregon to the Basque country, a new alt-country star takes flight.

"PAINT A new horizon/Leave my state on a whim," sings East Oregon's Margo Cilker on Chester's, and initially her debut album sounds like a very good, if broadly conventional, slice of Americana. A series of rueful highway travelogues often end in bars: "I'm a woman who drinks deeply," she admits on the gorgeous Emmylou plaint of Wine In The World, "it's my rosy coping mechanism." The wine, though, is a good Spanish Camarero, and it transpires that Pohorylle isn't a town in the Pacific Northwest, but the birthname of Spanish Civil War photographer Gerda Taro, picked up when Cilker was travelling in the Basque country. As in wandering, so in music. Cilker



Margo Cilker: deep drinker, big thinker.



clearly loves Gillian Welch and The

Band, but she's not averse to throwing a Dixieland jazz band into

the mix on Tehachapi, too. An auspicious new singer-songwriter, not afraid to broaden her horizons.

John Mulvey

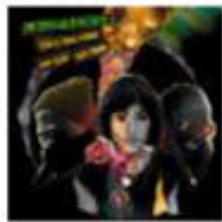
Joan As Police Woman/Tony Allen/Dave Okumu

★★★★★

The Solution Is Restless

PIAS. [CD/DL/LP](#)

Well-starred collab yields introspection, bedroom funk and unholy gospels.



In November 2019, six months before his untimely passing, Afro-beat godhead

Tony Allen improvised with Dave Okumu (The Invisible) and Joan Wasser (Joan As Police Woman) in a Paris recording studio. Wasser subsequently reworked those tapes into this shadowy, masterful set, the earthy complexity of Allen's rhythms suiting songs invested with the erotic charge of moral uncertainty and emotional entanglement. Evoking both the agonised grain of Nina Simone and the vulnerable gloss of Dusty Springfield, Wasser's vocal is similarly attuned to this suite of noirish groove and brooding, understated torch songs, examining all the confounding angles of obsession on Geometry Of You, and recomposing an identity in the company of Damon Albarn on the powerful Get My Bearings. But it's not all Bergmanesque self-examination: the lithe bedroom funk of Perfect Shade Of Blue makes explicit the carnal undertow bubbling throughout.

Stevie Chick

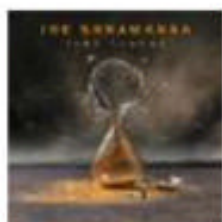
Joe Bonamassa

★★★

Time Clocks

PROVOGUE. [CD/DL/LP](#)

NY blues guitar titan gets autobiographical.



As sure as night follows day, another year brings another Joe Bonamassa album. *Time Clocks* is his 16th solo set and doesn't deviate much from the 15 which came before. Its predecessor, *Royal*

Tea, was an homage to the late-'60s Brit blues boom, but got a little lost when the pandemic derailed any touring plans. Recorded in New York with long-time producer Kevin Shirley, *Time Clocks* addresses its creator's personal journey. The title track suggests a man too focused on music to function in the outside world and provides a glimpse into the exhaustingly stoic Bonamassa's mindset. Elsewhere, The Loyal Kind's folksy intro evokes Jethro Tull, and Curtain Call's Eastern rhythms take the listener to the foothills of Kashmir. But The Heart That Never Waits and Mind's Eye are dragging, pomp-rock ballads. His solos still dazzle and the riff to Notches could move mountains, but too much of *Time Clocks* suggests Bonamassa by numbers.

Mark Blake

Aksak Maboul

★★★★

Redrawn Figures 1 & 2

CRAMMED DISCS. [DL/LP](#)

Marc Hollander/Veronique Vincent's 2020 comeback album Figures rebooted.



Resurgent Belgian experimentalists Aksak Maboul always did contain multitudes. Perhaps that's one reason why this enjoyable lucky dip of covers and remixes is perplexingly credited to the band itself, rather than the 'Various Artists' which might be a more accurate pointer to its diffuse provenance. Among those taking the Maboul by the horns are Vanishing Twin (a nifty remix of Silhouettes), The Notwist (bassoon-heavy chamber pop twist on Toute A Une Fin), Cate Le Bon, who gives Sophie La Bevue the full Stereolab B-side treatment, and Nihiloxica's Spooky-J who sands down Un Caid to make a practical paperweight. You need to get the original album first, but once you've completed stage one then hope to find this valuable companion piece somewhere in Santa's Aksak.

Ben Thompson

New Age Doom

★★★★★

Lee 'Scratch' Perry's Guide To The Universe

WE ARE BUSY BODIES. [CD/DL/LP](#)

Tempestuous union of drone jazz daddios and late reggae mad scientist.



An undisputed roots/dub reggae visionary and game-changer, Lee 'Scratch' Perry relied less on his genius and more on his madcap reputation after torching his Black Ark studios in 1983. If 2019's Adrian Sherwood collaboration *Rainford* debunked some more cartoonish myths, this tempestuous yet spaced-out team-up with Canadian drummer Eric J Breitenbach and multi-instrumentalist Greg Valou is even more restorative. Their high horns, low drones, trippy dubs and synthscapes envelop Perry's raspy incantations – calling through the drumbeats and feedback, part of the mix, never its star turn – as they summon a sonic storm alongside Donny McCaslin and Tim Lefebvre from Bowie's *Blackstar* band. Grand, unsettling, and a fitting finale that propels The Upsetter to a higher plain.

Andy Cowan

NOUS with Laraaji & Arji OceAnanda

★★★★

Circle Of Celebration

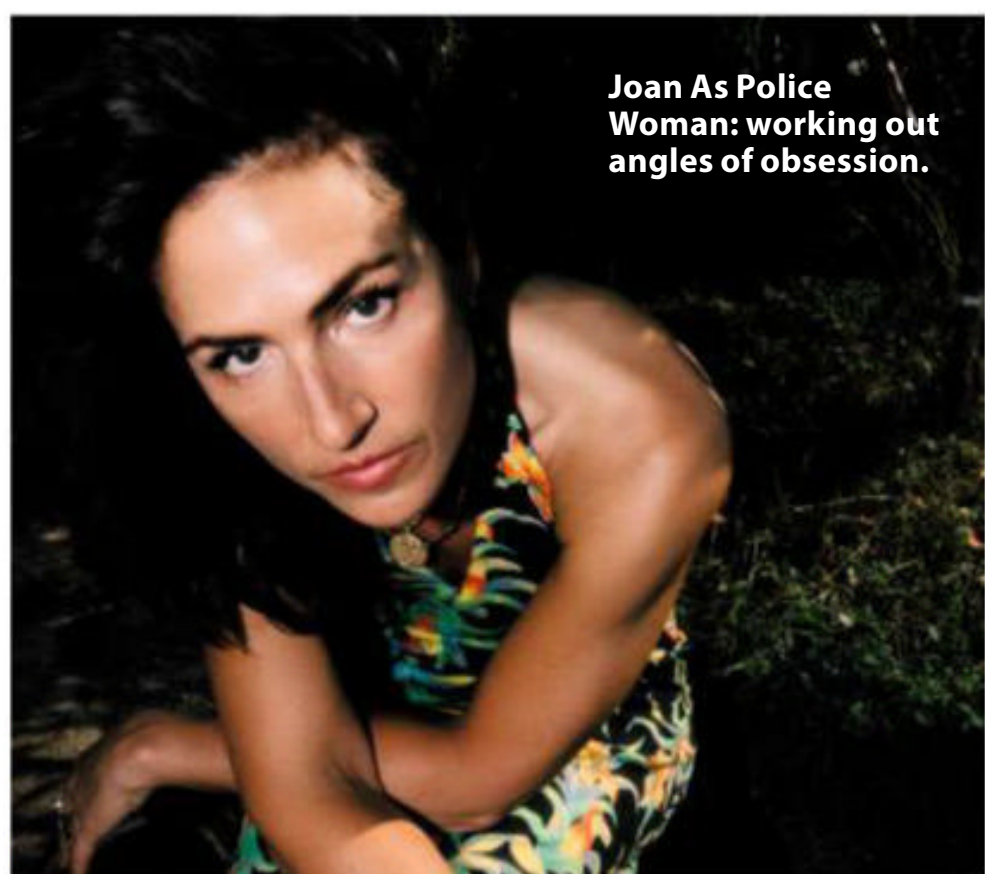
OUR SILENT CANVAS. [DL/LP](#)

Ambient improvisations by upstate New York composer Christopher Bono and pals.



Having already yielded three albums of genre-traversing improvised music between 2018 and 2020, *Circle Of Celebration* is the last and most tranquil release to be culled from the NOUS: A Musical Rite project which Christopher Bono organised at Dreamland Studios in Hurley, NY. Not your standard recording session, this ambitious five-day retreat saw the composer-producer invite 15 seasoned avant-garde players who've backed such as Laurie Anderson, Ben Frost, Yoko Ono and Tyondai Braxton to participate in a ritualistic daily routine involving yoga, silent meditation, vocal toning and body percussion. On the fourth day, the collective was joined by amplified zither maestro Laraaji (best known for 1980's Brian Eno-helmed *Ambient 3: Day Of Radiance*) and sound healing practitioner Arji OceAnanda. Textured and bucolic, its 10 pieces are gently rhythmic tapestries of new age melody, wordless vocals, dub-wise undulation and, pleasingly, cascades of actual laughter.

Manish Agarwal



Joan As Police Woman: working out angles of obsession.

WORLD

BY DAVID HUTCHEON



Orquesta Akokán

★★★★★

16 Rayos

DAPTONE. [CD/DL/LP](#)

Second outing from Daptone's "giant Cuban rhythm machine".



IT WOULD be ridiculously easy to dismiss Orquesta Akokán as retro, but at a time when looking back is often a greater sin than being competent, the big band makes no concessions to the streamlined modern age in which we live. Having paid their dues playing with the illustrious likes of Compay Segundo, Chucho Valdés and Arturo Sandoval, José Pepito Gómez et al were never going to dumb down their mambo. If their self-titled debut was a convincing calling card, the second album, recorded at Egrem Studios in Havana, has had to up the game: the horn arrangements are old school, the strings cinematic and the rhythmic interplay seductive. True, that declamatory, Ben Moré-style vocal hasn't aged particularly well, but if you want to convince yourself it's happy hour in El Floridita, this is what the house band would sound like.

ALSO RELEASED

Yat-Kha

★★★★

We Will Never Die

THE LOLLIPOP SHOPPE. [CD/DL/LP](#)



Rumours of the demise of Tuva's heavy-rock throat-singers were greatly exaggerated, it appears. Eleven years since their previous long-player, Albert Kuvezin and co return with nine tracks recorded in Swabia and Khakassia, dominated by his sub-bass voice, mouth harp and horsehair fiddle. Traditional songs and shamanic texts, plus Black Sabbath's Solitude and George Harrison's While My Guitar Gently Weeps.

Susana Baca

★★★★★

Palabras Urgentes

REAL WORLD. [CD/DL/LP](#)



Another who has been quiet too long, the Afro-Peruvian singer returns with what may be the finest album in her 50-year career. "It is time to stop thinking of having to please others," she says, though the production (by Snarky Puppy's Michael League) is likely to bring a few more fans on board. Chilling, sparse and funky in equal measure.

Monoswezi

★★★★

Shanu

RIVERBOAT. [CD](#)



Lush harmonies make the fifth album by the five-piece (three Scandinavian jazz musicians, a Zimbabwean mbira player and a Mozambican guitarist) one to savour. The band point to their use of mellotron for the depth of sound, but in truth you could get away with just about anything when your singer has as glorious a voice as Hope Masike's.

Montparnasse Musique

★★★★

Montparnasse Musique

REAL WORLD X. [DL/LP](#)



A trans-African trance explosion, as Franco-Algerian producer Nadjib Ben Bella, South African DJ Aero Manyelo and the cream of Kinshasa's crews – Kasai All Stars, Konono No. 1, Mbongwana Star – aim for the dance floor. Digital beats, repeating guitar patterns and thumb pianos played loud for maximum distortion – but crucially, this is all new Congotronics, rather than remixes. The beat goes on. *DH*

Packed with mysteries: Marissa Nadler, beautifully poised.

Marissa Nadler

★★★★★

The Path Of The Clouds

BELLA UNION. [CD/DL/LP](#)

Exquisitely wrought tales of mystery and imagination.

D.B. COOPER hijacked a plane over the Pacific Northwest in 1971. After forcing a landing to collect the ransom he demanded, the journey

resumed. He also wanted parachutes and, over Washington state, he jumped. Some of the money was later found but as to Cooper's fate, no one knows. The title track of Marissa Nadler's ninth album draws from this perplexing tale, repurposing it as a metaphor for controlling destiny. The album starts with Bessie Did You Make It?, a fully fictive rumination on the title character's perilous canoe



excursion. In time, bones are found. Are they Bessie's? The beautifully poised *The Path Of The Clouds* is packed with such mysteries. Musically, Nadler's virtuoso, downbeat songs radiate the foreboding accompanying the inspection of a locked room being reopened after decades. Perfect for David Lynch, should he require stimulation.

Kieron Tyler

Houndmouth

★★★★★

Good For You

DUALTONE. [CD/DL/LP](#)

Fourth LP's volte-face prompts tail-wags all round.



Four albums in, New Albany, Indiana's Houndmouth here undergo another radical rebirth. Trading the Daft Punk and Frank Ocean-influenced strains of 2018's *Golden Age* for a mostly mellow rusticity, *Good For You* should chime with fans of *Tight Knit*-era Vetiver or Mac DeMarco at his most reflective. If Ride Or Die's divine piano and assonant opening couplets – "Passed the mansions/They're throwing plastic/Wasted hairbands/Unsnapped elastic" – speak of a trio highly attuned to nuances of mood and scene setting, it's the single McKenzie, remembering a brief affair with a charismatic waitress, and built on a nagging acoustic guitar hook, which impresses most. Hatched at Houndmouth's 19th century den The Green House with Brad Cook (Waxahatchee) and Jon Ashley (The War On Drugs) at the controls, *Good For You* is an escapist tonic.

James McNair



Andy Shauf

★★★★★

Wilds

ANTI-. [CD/DL/LP](#)

Canadian songwriter's superb collection of B-sides and unreleased tracks.

Andy Shauf is a master of minutiae. The Canadian songwriter's 2016 breakthrough, *The Party*, based its thematic concept on one single house party, while last year's *The Neon Skyline* repeated the trick using a night in a small town bar (and won Shauf a fan in Barack Obama in the process). *Wilds* is a compilation of unreleased material and B-sides so there's no overarching thread tying these songs together. Yet, like a collection of well-written short stories, each track tells its own rich tale. Highlight Jaywalker is an account of someone hit by a car while thinking about their ex, set to drifting, cosmic Americana. Indeed, everything here pairs Shauf's empathetic character studies with delicately shuffling, Wilco-like arrangements. It's a mark of Shauf's talent that songs this deft could ever have been left to gather dust.

Chris Catchpole

Nathaniel Rateliff & The Night Sweats

★★★★★

The Future

STAX. [CD/DL/LP](#)

R&B, gospel and soul man's third album with the Night Sweats, his seventh overall.



Veering between introspective solo material and more expansive

band work, Nathaniel Rateliff hardly seemed like the next big thing as he toiled through Colorado's bars for a decade. Then, in 2015, his first Night Sweats album sold over a million. That has allowed him to establish a niche for the kind of gospel- and country-inflected soul that Shelby Lynne almost broke through with. Here, Jenny Lewis is on backing vocals as he covers old bases with new fervour, but there's so much happening, so much detail that it feels like a giant leap forwards. The apocalyptic, echo-drenched opening title track finds Rateliff singing with the finger-pointing conviction of born again-era Bob Dylan as he berates "your blind ignorance", but Survivor has a cascading chorus that could have graced an En Vogue hit, while Lover Don't gallops along like peak period Motown. And that's only the start of it

John Aizlewood

Light Conductor

★★★★★

Sequence Two

CONSTELLATION. [CD/DL/LP](#)

Ecstatic electronics from members of The Besnard Lakes and Stephen Ramsay.



Light Conductor's pleasant if forgettable *Sequence One* was an archetypal side

project debut, enabling Canadian indie stalwarts The Besnard Lakes' Jace Lasek and Stephen Ramsay (Young Galaxy) to indulge their fondness for saucer-eyed psych jams via analogue synthesizers rather than FX-laden guitars. *Sequence Two* is a quantum leap by comparison, opening with a bona fide banger in the 14-minute Splitting Light: a huge, evergrowing nebula of Tangerine Dream-y arpeggios that explodes into pulsating, warp speed anthemics complete with falsetto vocal chorus (think Bon Iver in deepest space) and distorted drone-chug afterburn. Sensibly, they've done a radio edit. The three remaining instrumentals are no filler, either. Pyramids In Slow Rotation makes good on its grandiose title with a vast collage of trance-inducing synth tones and darkside rumbling. In contrast, The Rooms Are Turning Inside Out is a shimmering, celestial soundscape and Life Under A Double Sun a suitably dilated, blissful closer.

Manish Agarwal

The Pop Group

★★★★

Y In Dub

MUTE. [CD/DL](#)

Post-punk classic fearlessly deconstructed by Dennis Bovell MBE.



On July 31, 2021, maverick UK reggae linchpin Bovell premiered a live-mix assault

on punk-funk pioneers The Pop Group's *Y* as part of Coventry's City Of Culture celebrations. As 2019's 40th anniversary reissue of the album flagged up, the original nine Bovell-produced tracks were quite out-there to begin with, and this studio revision is anything but a conventional head-nodding dub experience. The spectral opening take on Thief Of Fire focuses on Simon Underwood's bass line, albeit an unsettlingly spidery meander on the higher strings, while We Are Time simply acquires echo and delay around its propulsive groove's fringes. Aside from those two catchier raw materials, the remainder are abstractions of the already abstract: Blood Money has its beat decelerated to a sub-16rpm trudge, while Words Disobey Me foregrounds gnarly skronk. Bonus tilts at She Is Beyond Good And Evil (the single!) and 3:38 perform even more ruthless disassembly, making *Y In Dub* strictly for fans of the 'difficult'.

Andrew Perry

Modern Nature

★★★★

Island Of Noise

BELLA UNION. [LP](#)

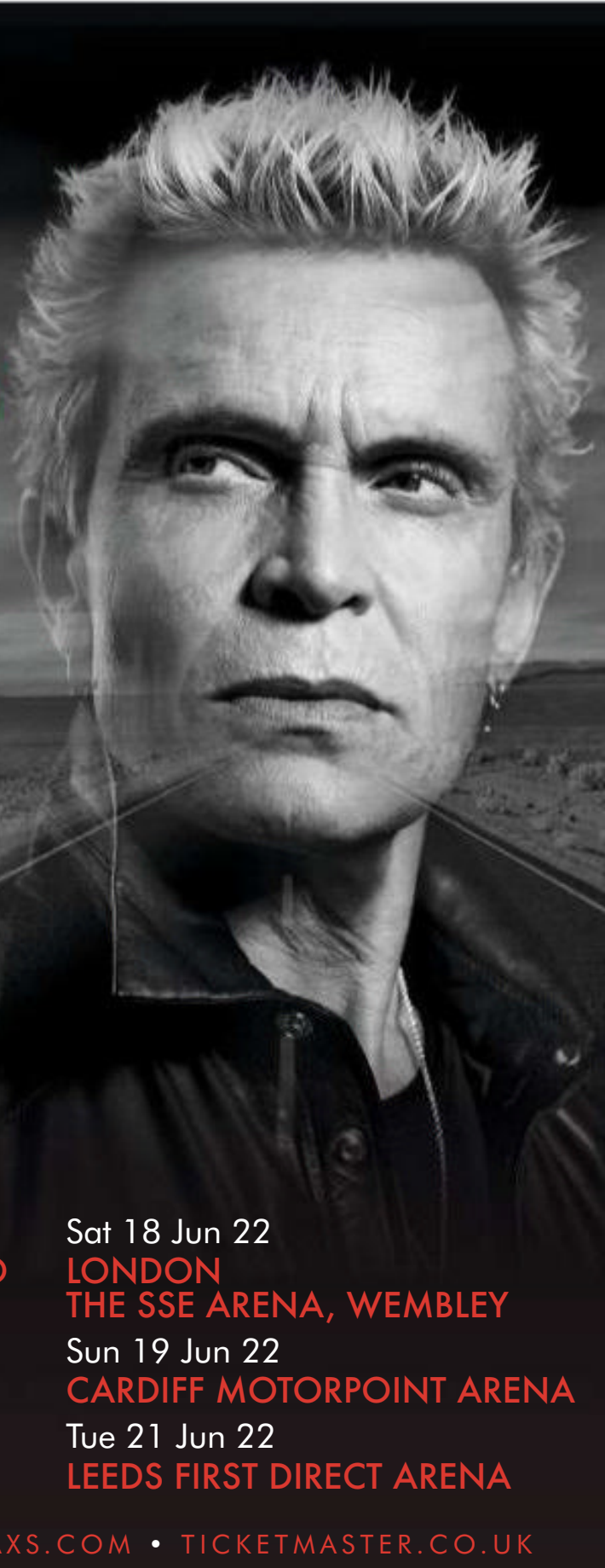
Second full-length from ex-Ultimate Painting frontman Jack Cooper and compadres.



Nodding to Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, the latest from the prolific Modern Nature

(mini-albums and cassette-only releases abound) seeks refuge from the clamour and confusion of our times in songs that marry folk-inflected introspection to brass and strings improvisation. Drily recorded and subtle to a fault, in places, *Island Of Noise* becomes so evanescent it threatens to disappear altogether, but when Cooper's whispered, fragmentary vocals and shimmering electric guitar greet Aaron Neveu's rolling drum patterns and Jeff Tobias' meandering brass arabesques, as they do on sublime stand-outs Dunes and Masque, there is a jazzily transcendent, inefably British Isles magic at play here – Nick Drake and Mark Hollis spring readily to mind. The accompanying *Island Of Silence* proffers an all-instrumental 'reimagining' of the songs, while a slim volume features related texts by authors including poet Robin Robertson and, it says here, fungus expert Merlin Sheldrake.

David Sheppard



BILLY IDOL

PLUS VERY SPECIAL GUESTS

THE GO-GOS

LONG AWAITED UK RETURN

**THE
ROADSIDE
TOUR
2022**

Sat 11 Jun 22 GLASGOW THE SSE HYDRO	Sat 18 Jun 22 LONDON THE SSE ARENA, WEMBLEY
Mon 13 Jun 22 MANCHESTER AO ARENA	Sun 19 Jun 22 CARDIFF MOTORPOINT ARENA
Wed 15 Jun 22 BIRMINGHAM RESORTS WORLD ARENA	Tue 21 Jun 22 LEEDS FIRST DIRECT ARENA

AEGPRESENTS.CO.UK • AXS.COM • TICKETMASTER.CO.UK

AN AEG PRESENTATION IN ASSOCIATION WITH ITB AND ARRANGEMENT WITH ANOTHER PLANET MANAGEMENT

AEG PRESENTS IN ASSOCIATION WITH UTA AND ITB

ALICE COOPER THE CULT

PLUS SPECIAL GUESTS

MON 23.05.22 SWANSEA ARENA
WED 25.05.22 LONDON THE O2
FRI 27.05.22 MANCHESTER AO ARENA
SAT 28.05.22 GLASGOW THE SSE HYDRO
MON 30.05.22 BIRMINGHAM RESORTS WORLD ARENA
WED 01.06.22 LEEDS FIRST DIRECT ARENA

AEGPRESENTS.CO.UK • AXS.COM • TICKETMASTER.CO.UK

ALICECOOPER.COM THECULT.US f t i

DEXYS

TOO-RYE AY,
AS IT SHOULD HAVE SOUNDED
UK TOUR 2022



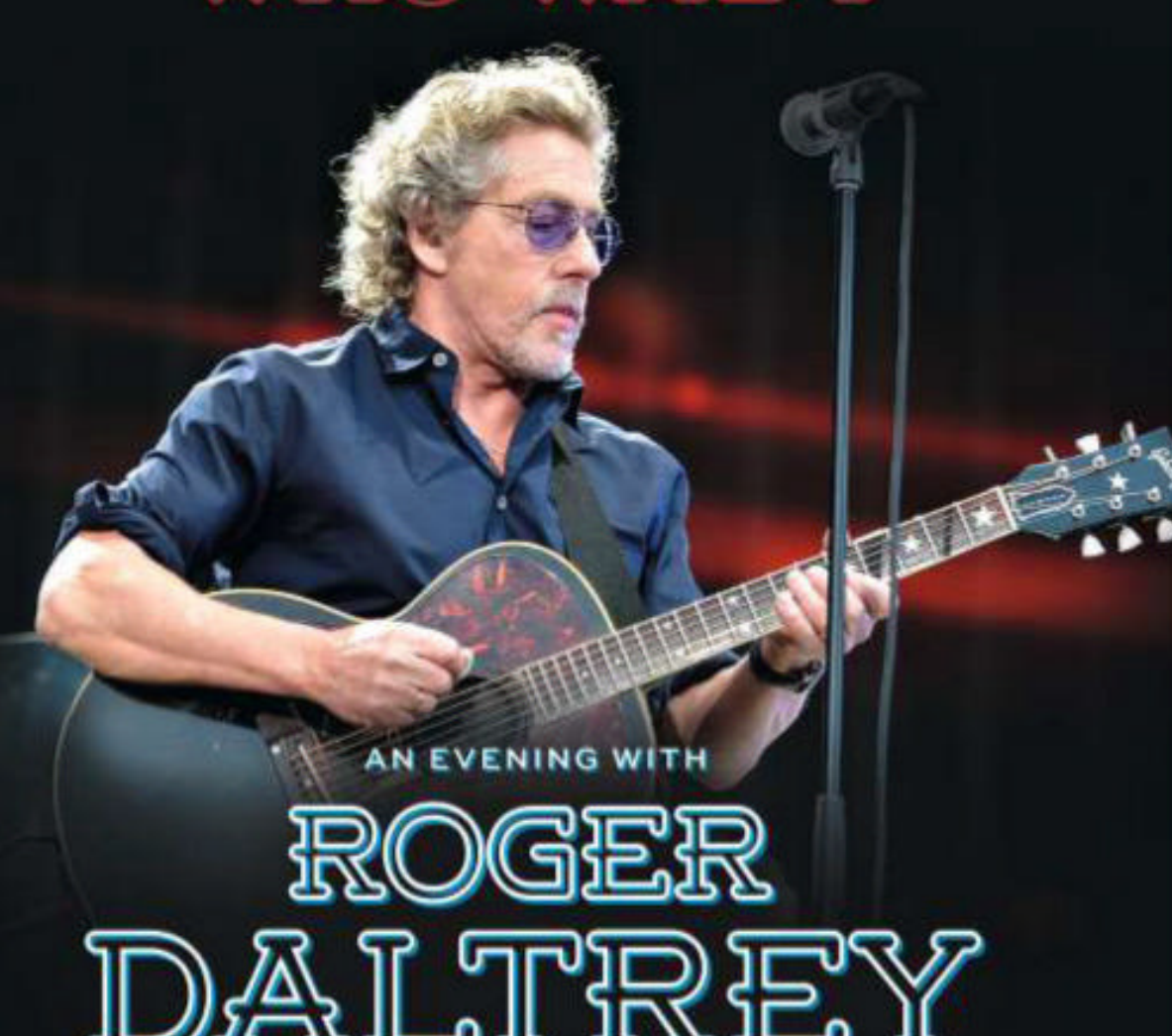
SEPTEMBER

17 BATH THE FORUM	26 BIRMINGHAM SYMPHONY HALL
18 OXFORD NEW THEATRE	27 CAMBRIDGE CORN EXCHANGE
19 BRIGHTON DOME	29 CARDIFF ST DAVID'S HALL
21 MANCHESTER ALBERT HALL	30 YORK BARBICAN
22 GLASGOW ROYAL CONCERT HALL	OCTOBER
24 NEWCASTLE O2 CITY HALL	02 LONDON PALLADIUM

AEGPRESENTS.CO.UK / AXS.COM / TICKETMASTER.CO.UK

AEG PRESENTS IN ASSOCIATION WITH PARADIGM AND TVMANAGEMENT

WHO WAS I



AN EVENING WITH
ROGER DALTREY

ACOUSTIC • ELECTRIC • Q&A • CLASSICS • SOLO HITS & RARITIES

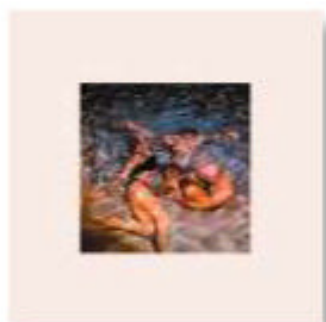
NOVEMBER 2021

SUN 07 BIRMINGHAM SYMPHONY HALL	SUN 21 OXFORD NEW THEATRE
TUE 09 MANCHESTER O2 APOLLO	WED 24 GLASGOW SEC ARMADILLO
THU 11 NOTTINGHAM ROYAL CONCERT HALL	FRI 26 NEWCASTLE O2 CITY HALL
MON 15 LONDON PALLADIUM	MON 29 LIVERPOOL EMPIRE THEATRE
WED 17 BRIGHTON CENTRE	DECEMBER 2021
FRI 19 SOUTHEND CLIFFS PAVILION	WED 01 PORTSMOUTH GUILDHALL
	THU 02 BOURNEMOUTH INTERNATIONAL CENTRE

AEGPRESENTS.CO.UK • AXS.COM • TICKETMASTER.CO.UK

THEWHO.COM f t i

AEG PRESENTS IN ASSOCIATION WITH ITB



Coco

★★★★★
Coco
FIRST CITY ARTISTS. [CD/DL](#)

Beautifully enigmatic pop from Maia Friedman (Dirty Projectors), Dan Molad (Lucius) and Oliver Hill (Pavo Pavo), sung mostly by Friedman with spotless, Julian Holter meets Patsy Cline diction. Balmy dreampop highlight: the Fleetwood Mac swoon of One Time Villain. *JB*



Jhelisa

★★★★★
7 Keys V.1 & V.2
DORADO. [DL](#)

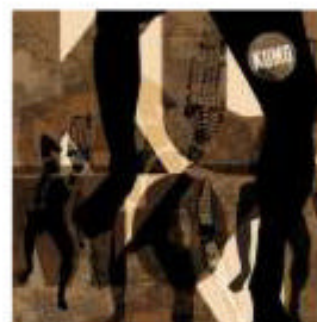
Absent since the late '90s, eclectic soul chanteuse Jhelisa's comeback is built on layered recordings of her singing one sustained note at a time, mixed with electronica and ambient beats. Psychedelic meditation music for Alice Coltrane and Joanna Brouk acolytes. *AC*



Ill Considered

★★★★★
Liminal Space
NEW SOIL. [DL/LP](#)

First fully-produced set from London jazz improvisers augments their slash/burn blend of hard bop, minimalism and free jazz with taut charts. Saxophonist Idris Rahman rides its labyrinthine grooves with no lessening of IC's compelling live edge. *AC*



Kumo

★★★★★
Slave Dances (Seven Portraits)
SOUND-SPACE/PSYCHOMAT. [DL](#)

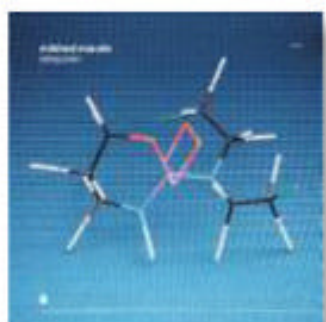
An album/book coinciding with the International Day For The Remembrance Of The Slave Trade And Its Abolition, the electronic auteur/martial artist examines erased truths of the Charleston, Hambone and other dances-as-witness. *IH*



Mary Lattimore

★★★★★
Collected Pieces II
GHOSTLY INTERNATIONAL. [CD/DL/LP](#)

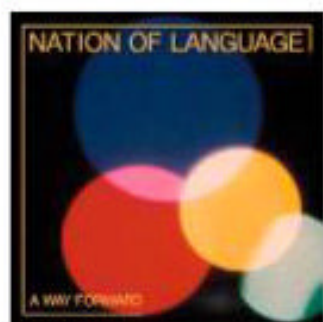
Comp of new and rare tracks from the LA harpist/composer, ranges from pastoral ambience (We Wave From Our Boats) to impressionistic or processed (Sleeping Deer – inspired by an orphaned deer at an artist residency on a Wyoming ranch) but always deftly played. *JB*



Mildred Maude

★★★★★
Sleepover
SONIC CATHEDRAL. [CD/DL/LP](#)

Adrenalised guitar dynamics from a Cornish trio across four instrumentals evoking MBV-fried pulsations, Slowdive's slo-mo pop and Mogwai's high-tension space rock. Ends with the epic Glen Plays Moses, raiding the Branca/Sonic Youth toolbox for its guitar attack. *JB*



Nation Of Language

★★★★★
A Way Forward
NATION OF LANGUAGE. [CD/DL/LP](#)

This swift sequel to last year's *Introduction*, *Presence* finds the Brooklyn band's Ian Devaney's tremulous tones and Michael Sue-Poi's melodic bass lines cutting deep on heartbroken ballads Wounds Of Love and Former Self. *AC*



Jessica Pavone

★★★★★
Lull
CHAIKIN. [CD/DL](#)

Phrase-switching and layered improvs of NY composer's first octet outing are enhanced by Yeah Yeah Yeahs' percussionist Brian Chase's rattles and Nate Wooley's wavering trumpet drones. Pavone's unfurling melodies prove balm-like, with a discrete sense of time. *AC*



Sea Fever

★★★★★
Folding lines
KARTEL MUSIC GROUP. [CD/DL/LP](#)

Manchester collective of Iwan Gronow (Haven), Beth Cassidy (Section 25), Tom Chapman and Phil Cunningham (both New Order) blend laidback melodies with hi-spec modern production. Using electronics, strings, male/female vocals, the debut shows great promise. *CL*



Julia Shapiro

★★★★★
Zorked
SUICIDE SQUEEZE. [CD/DL/LP/MC](#)

Chastity Belt singer in stoned, reflective mood. Rueful on Wrong Time ("This was the wrong choice at the worst time"), elsewhere plans are hashed and emotional links lost amid slow, melodic guitar whiteout. But still, a lovely place to get lost. *JB*

EXTENDED PLAY

Erland Cooper

Never Pass Into Nothingness

Last seen burying an album master tape in the soil of his Orcadian homeland (it's due to be exhumed in 2024), singer-composer Cooper's first offering for Universal imprint Mercury KX is a ruminative instrumental EP with a short accompanying film by photographer Alex Kozobolis. Inspired by film-maker Margaret Tate's vision of beauty emanating from quotidian environments, and with a nod to John Keats' *Endymion* in the title and Kathryn Joseph's hushed recitations, *Never Pass Into Nothingness* is an almost Zen-like hymn to timeless, transporting quietude. "Peace can be found in exploring a poetry below your feet or just above your eye," avers Cooper in the film's introductory commentary, while the footage, shot in monochrome, follows the composer as he perambulates a drizzle-marinated City of London, pausing to commune with nature – a rippling Barbican Centre lake, some wintry trees, a white feather... The music's immersive weave of ambient piano and subtly aching strings (poignant central chamber piece, *But Still Will Keep A Bower Quiet*, would have sat comfortably on the Penguin Cafe Orchestra's *Broadcasting From Home*) accentuates the improbable pastoral tranquillity. *DS*



Peace be with you:
Erland Cooper
contemplates
the quiet.



Patrick Shiroishi

★★★★★
Hidemi
AMERICA DREAMS. [CD/DL/LP](#)

Inspired by his grandfather's time in Japanese-American concentration camps, *Hidemi* is no joyride. Yet the LA saxman rages hard against clichés, filtering woodwind through loops and effects as harmonics negotiate freeform freak-outs and folk introspection. *AC*



Various

★★★★★
Craig Charles Trunk Of Funk Vol 2
SOULBANK MUSIC. [CD/DL](#)

The Allergies' Move On Baby remixed opens Charles' second set of good-foot grooves new and old. Highlights: Delvon Lamarr Organ Trio newbie Hole In One; The Crow's heart-swelling Northern soul Your Autumn Of Tomorrow. *JB*

FEED THEIR IMAGINATION THIS CHRISTMAS



**Free £10
Retail eGift**
CHOOSE FROM OVER 50 RETAILERS
*with subscriptions over £28

WHY SUBSCRIBE?

- * Free £10 Retail eGift when you purchase a subscription over £28
- * Save money on shop prices when you subscribe
- * Each issue delivered directly to your door with FREE UK delivery
- * Read your digital magazine on the go using your smart device
- * Like a big tin of Christmas chocolates, Great Magazines has a variety to suit every taste!

ORDER TODAY:

GREATMAGAZINES.CO.UK/ENJOY
01858 438884

SOME OF OUR MOST POPULAR TITLES...

EMPIRE

GRAZIA

Yours

Take
aBreak

CRIME

MOJO

+ MANY MORE!

T&Cs: We will email you your voucher instructions within 7 days. The £10 Retailer eGift promotion is open to UK residents only, aged 18 and over. Offer applies when an annual subscription over the value of £28 is purchased, excluding trials and renewals. Offer is subject to availability and ends 25/10/21. E-gifts must be chosen by 31.12.21 and are valid for use for 12 months. Free £10 Retailer eGift is non-transferable. Your subscription will start with the next available issue. Cost from landlines for 01 numbers per minute are (approximate) 2p to 10p. Cost from mobiles per minute (approximate) 10p to 40p. Costs vary depending on the location in the UK. You may get free calls to some numbers as part of your call package – please check with your phone provider. Order lines open 8am–9.30pm (Mon–Fri), 8am–4pm (Sat). Calls may be monitored or recorded for training purposes. For full terms and conditions visit www.greatmagazines.co.uk/terms

Forget-me-not

In which Croz confronts grief, and a solo career, with a lot of help from his friends. An ethereal masterpiece, usefully expanded. By **John Mulvey**.

David Crosby



If I Could Only Remember My Name

RHINO. CD/DL/LP

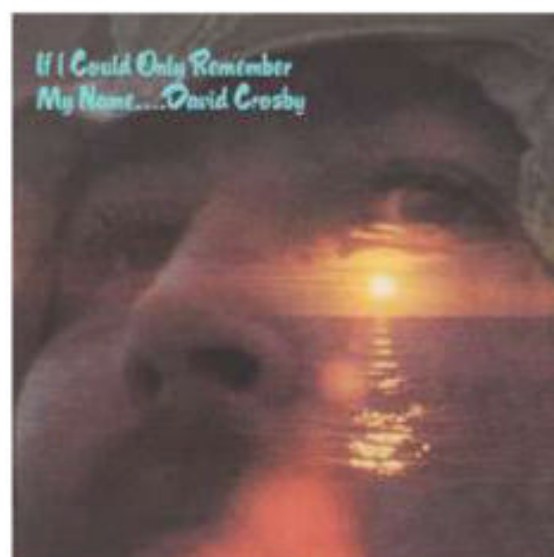
CONTRARY TO popular opinion, the most stacked supergroup of the early 1970s was not Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young. CSNY were not even, in fact, the most auspicious collective to include David Crosby, Graham Nash and Neil Young at the time. That honour went to a bigger, wilder, albeit less-heralded amalgam known briefly as The Planet Earth Rock And Roll Orchestra.

Its discography was sketchy, its personnel fluid, but PERRO pivoted around Crosby, Nash and most of the Grateful Dead and Jefferson Airplane, with auxiliary memberships for Young and Joni Mitchell, among others. Named by Jefferson Airplane guitarist Paul Kantner, they convened for his late 1970 album, *Blows Against The Empire*; a baroque psych gang show that recast the counterculture's desire to escape urban life as a sci-fi mission to distant planets rather than as a rural property grab in Laurel Canyon or Marin County.

Crosby had moved next door to Dead drummer Mickey Hart's Marin ranch in late 1969, and the Orchestra members had many other things in common, not least a fondness for Wally Heider Studios in San Francisco's Tenderloin, and for Kantner's awe-inspiring "Ice Bag" weed. It was at Heider's that CSNY had battled

through *Déjà Vu*, and where the Dead had crafted the sepia-toned epiphanies of *American Beauty*. As sessions for that last album were winding down in the summer of 1970, the Orchestra's amorphous jams began to coalesce into their finest achievement. The stories that have become legend about Crosby and his circle often fixate on feuding, egomania, patterns of behaviour that in most every light look morally unconscionable. But *If I Could Only Remember My Name* reveals an alternative, parallel truth: a solo album, predicated on one man's grief, where a musical community came together to help him transcend it.

On the morning of September 30, 1969, the same week that the first CSN album went gold in the States, Crosby's girlfriend Christine Hinton handed over a few joints to Crosby and Nash, loaded her cats into a green Volkswagen bus, and left their Marin place on the way to the vet. En route, she crashed into a school bus coming in the opposite direction; Crosby would have to identify her body later in the day. The tragedy did not derail work on *Déjà Vu*, and by the summer of 1970 Crosby was still processing his loss. "I didn't have any equipment to deal with that," he told Jesse Jarnow for the Good Ol' Grateful Deadcast



"A large cast moves with great discretion, giving Crosby space to express himself, psychedelic and medieval."

in 2020. "The only place that I knew I wouldn't be utterly terrified and crying and distraught was in the studio... They all knew that the only time I was happy was when I was singing, so they got me singing every chance they could get. It was an act of kindness, but it was also joy, man."

If I Could Only Remember My Name had a large cast, but they moved with great discretion. There were communal healing rites like the opening Music Is Love, and one solemn indictment of The Man – What Are Their Names, featuring a chorale of Nash, Young, Mitchell, Kantner, Jerry Garcia, Phil Lesh, Grace Slick and David Freiberg ("Peace is not an awful lot to ask..."). Mostly, though, their presence was blurred and indistinct, giving Crosby the space to express himself in the distraught way – abstracted tunings, wordless harmonies, an aesthetic at once psychedelic and medieval – that he'd been finessing since his time in The Byrds.

Pieces like Tamalpais High (At About 3) and Traction In The Rain were ravishing, ethereal developments on what he had begun to achieve with Everybody's Been Burned and Triad. Many of the songs had, it transpired, been works in progress long before Hinton's death. Among the treasures on disc two of this 50th anniversary reissue, five key demos date back as far as spring 1968,

including a wondrous solo Laughing. It's one of the finished album's enduring miracles that the released version, with Mitchell and Nash providing vocal textures and Garcia bathing the song in diaphanous pedal steel washes, retains every bit of the demo's fragility.

Of the 14 extra tracks assembled here, three have surfaced previously: the gorgeous Kids And Dogs, a Crosby and Garcia acoustic improvisation that first turned up as the sole bonus track on the 2006 reissue; a '69 demo of Song With No Words (Tree With No Leaves), from a 1991 CSN box set; and an alternate version of Cowboy Movie, from Crosby's 2006 *Voyage* comp. The last is especially worth rediscovering, featuring as it does Neil Young duking it out with Jerry Garcia in a jam that recalls CSNY live versions of Down By The River (Garcia, out of character, affects the sputtering, indignant Stephen Stills role).

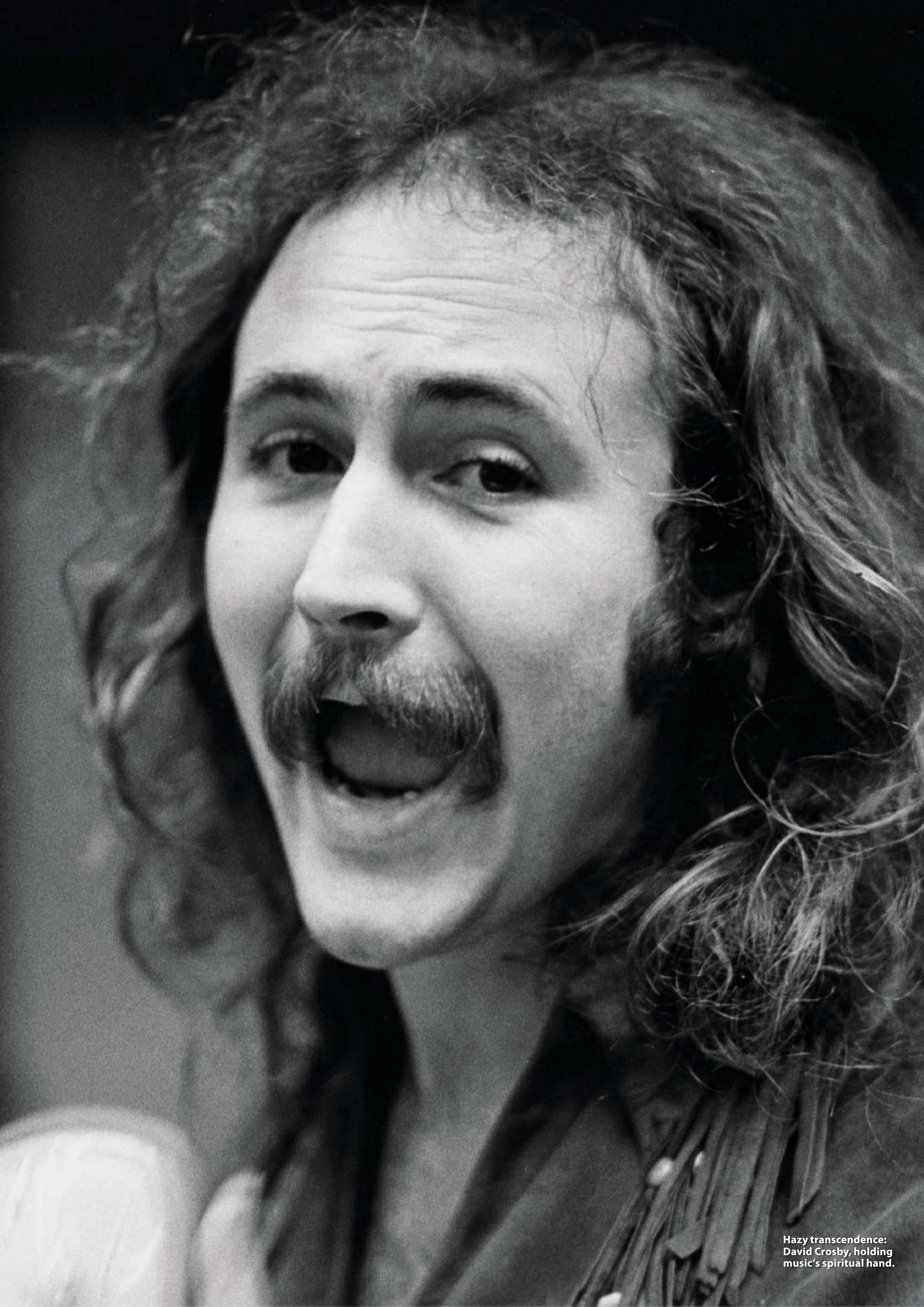
What you don't get are any of the sprawling PERRO bootlegs (some reputedly capture the band being paid in dope), or live tracks by the short-lived Crosby/Dead side-project David And The Dorks. Instead, there are prototypes of five tunes – The Wall Song, Games, Where Will I Be?, Critical Mass, Dancer – that would eventually grace Crosby & Nash albums in 1972 and 1976.

There is also one more or less complete song that's never been officially released in any form. Coast Road features Crosby and Nash on acoustics, alongside one of PERRO's less famous participants, Laura Allan, on autoharp. The prevailing air is one of hazy transcendence – the subject matter, ostensibly, is the sun peering through Marin County fog – and the music is spectral and delicate even by the ineffably spectral and delicate standards of *If I Could Only Remember My Name*. Spiritually, though, Coast Road's value is easier to quantify: that the acts of making, sharing and listening to music can help brighter times gradually emerge. Recalling the sessions to Jesse Jarnow, engineer Stephen Barncard described tunes manifesting out of "dicking around". "David was so happy, jumping up and down, so open," he continued. "You know the cosmic thing where you leave a space for something to happen? Well, that's what David did."

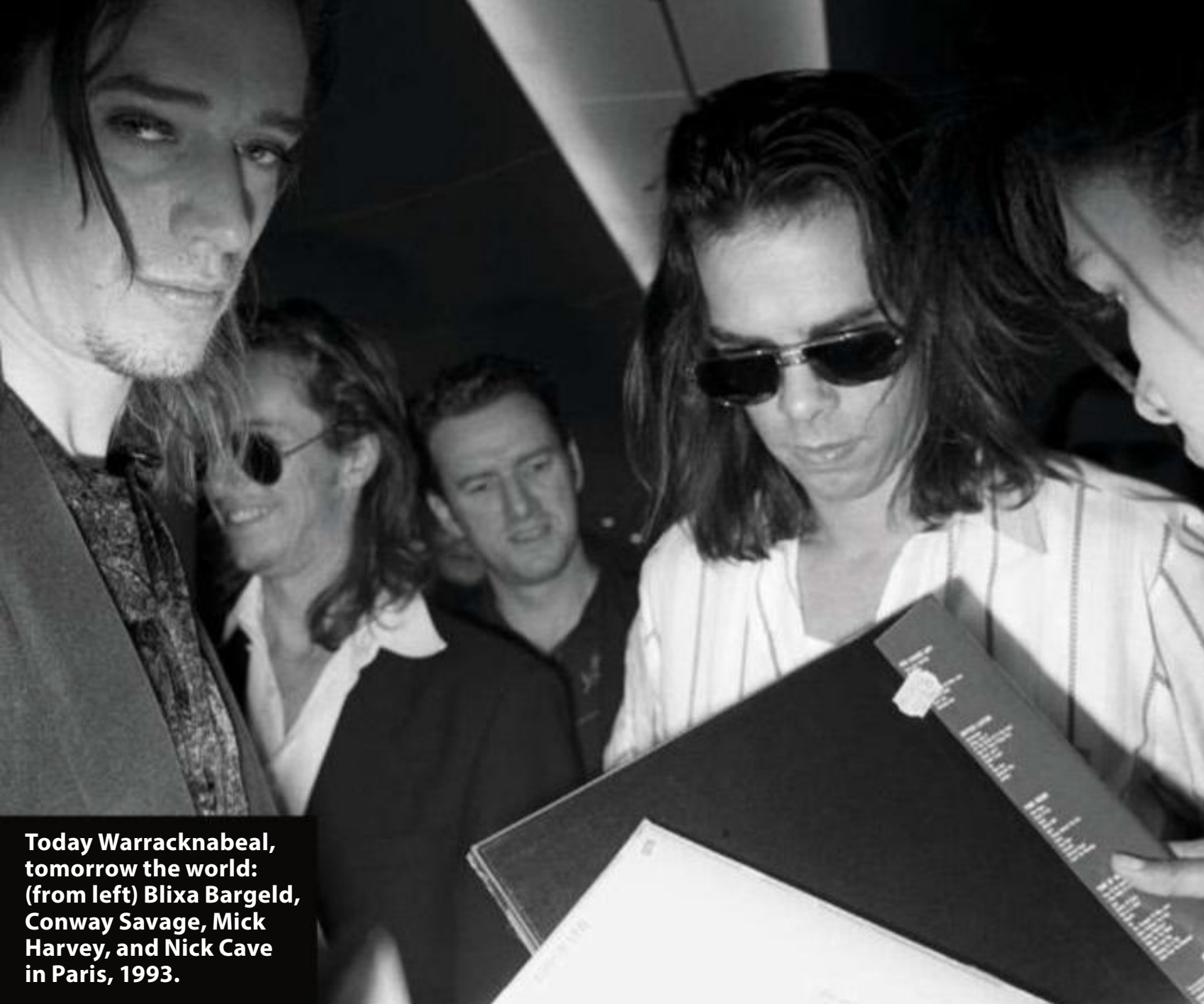


BACK STORY: NEIL VS JERRY

● Of all the orbiting members of the Planet Earth Rock And Roll Orchestra, Neil Young was predictably the least clubbable. Young did not, David Crosby insists, really understand the Grateful Dead in particular. "When I got Jerry and Neil in the same room, Neil was feeling I think nervous," Crosby told Jesse Jarnow. "He felt like the outsider. He was trying too hard, he was very fierce in his playing and it was like he was trying to compete with Jerry, which of course doesn't work. Jerry won't compete with you. He will play better than you, but he won't compete with you."



Hazy transcendence:
David Crosby, holding
music's spiritual hand.



Today Warracknabeal, tomorrow the world: (from left) Blixa Bargeld, Conway Savage, Mick Harvey, and Nick Cave in Paris, 1993.

Little Ghost Songs

New chapters added to alternative history of The Bad Seeds' expanding world. By **Victoria Segal**.

Nick Cave & The Bad Seeds

★★★★★
B-Sides And Rarities
Parts I & II

BMG. **CD/DL/LP**

A RARITIES compilation isn't about full-blown, album-sized perfection; at best it's a strange shadow cabinet of curiosities, throwing light on the past and the future. Nick Cave has declared his fondness for the 2005 version of this compilation, assembled by (now former) Bad Seed Mick Harvey and reissued here as *Part I*, and it's easy to see why. Here's the chance to revisit the oddities and the misfits (Where The Wild Roses Grow with Blixa Bargeld taking the Kylie Minogue role, maybe), to see the sketches and blueprints, to hear what might have been.

The acoustic version of *Tender Prey's* leprous spree-killing Deanna, for example, runs into the spiritual O Happy Day, the Bad Seeds black-lighting their song's original splash of gospel DNA. The sloshing, boot-stomping 1993 take on Australian country song There's No Night Out In The Jail, meanwhile, looks back to the criminally insane world of The Birthday Party and early Bad Seeds and foreshadows *Murder Ballads*. Most significant in hindsight, however, is the candlelit drama of Time Jesum Transeuntum Et Non Riverentum, recorded with The Dirty Three in 1996, shortly before Warren Ellis

joined The Bad Seeds. (The track wound up on an X-Files compilation, a genuinely unexplained phenomenon).

It is Ellis who curated *Part II* of *B-Sides And Rarities* alongside Cave, moving the story on from 2008's hectic *Dig!!! Lazarus Dig!!!* There are still curiosities – Cave and Debbie Harry covering Jeffrey Lee Pierce's weary Free To Walk, 2006's Grinderman-era casualty Vortex, excellent B-side Hey Little Firing Squad – but the record divides with a stately live version of Push The Sky Away, performed with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra.

What follows is a rich, revelatory selection of tracks from and around 2016's *Skeleton Tree* and 2019's *Ghosteen*, records profoundly shaped by grief. There are startling first outlines of Girl In Amber, Waiting For You and Bright Horses, as well as previously unreleased songs. The beautiful drone of Heart That Kills You finds new ways to tangle with Adam And Eve; Earthlings and Big Dream (With Sky) find different twists through Cave's apocalyptic landscapes. "I have nothing against life per se," sings Cave on Life Per Se, piano full of his *Boatman's Call*-era past, *Ghosteen's* porous thrum still present.

On the spoken word of Steve McQueen, first seen during 2016 documentary One More Time With Feeling, Cave's tightly knotted metaphors – flies, film stars, the Burj Al-Arab – loosen to a simple admission: "Someone's got to sing the stars/And someone's got to sing the rain/Someone's got to sing the blood/And someone's got to sing the pain." These might not be the first Bad Seeds songs you would turn to for that, but even here, out at the margins, they're up to the task.



Akiko Yano

★★★★★

Ai Ga Nakucha Ne
WEWANTSOUNDS. **CD/DL/LP**

Singer's 1982 collaboration with Japan's Mick Karn, Steve Jansen and David Sylvian.



The first Japanese musician to embrace sequencers – employing Yellow Magic Orchestra as her backing band – Akiko Yano was on an electro-pop roll in the early 1980s, putting a ribbon on a synth trilogy initiated with *Gohan Ga Dekitayo*. Ai Suru Hito Yo and the bright, bubbly title track find the singer repeatedly short-changed as just a Japanese Kate Bush, painting great silken pictures in deceptively powerful tones. Only the haunting Kanashikute Yarikirenai (whose choppy marimbas are reminiscent of Forbidden Colours) and fleeting closer Good Night (a smoky duet with David Sylvian) betray the presence of Japan and co-producer Ryuichi Sakamoto, Mick Karn's fretless bass curiously low in the mix. As with Pennie Smith's cover shot – Yano alongside a friendly cow – its twisty, exploratory contents reaffirm its creator's maverick spirit.

Andy Cowan



Come

★★★★★

Don't Ask Don't Tell

FIRE. **CD/DL/LP**

Bostonians' post-hardcore classic from 1994, expanded.

All of Thalia Zedek's traumas are plain to hear in the rasp and depth of her voice. Battling a music industry prejudiced against her gender and sexuality, Zedek was almost a post-punk veteran by the time she joined guitarist (and former Codeine drummer) Chris Brokaw and rhythm section Sean O'Brien and Arthur Johnson in Come. By then, she was overcoming heroin addiction and singing out her pain, crowned by their second album (of four) *Don't Ask Don't Tell*. Pitched between Sonic Youth circa *EVOL* and Codeine's molten slowcore, Come's lack of immediacy was made up for by Zedek's intensity and ruptures of euphoria despite the overwhelming heaviness – for example a flailing Yr Reign, and Let's Get Lost's slow trip to boiling point. Car, which kicks off the bonus disc of rarities, is even better, one of the greatest post-hardcore singles.

Martin Aston

Joy Denalane

★★★★★

Let Yourself
Be Loved

LESEDI/MOTOWN. **CD/DL/LP**

Expanded reissue of 2020 LP from Germany's Queen of Soul, her first for Motown.



On her second English-language album, Germany's most influential soul star does more than just burnish the pop-oriented neo-soul that made her name, plunging into an effortless evocation of the classic Motown sound, rich with brass, strings and choirs. And while Berlin-born Denalane's focus rarely wavers from matters of the heart, her songs, sympathetically produced by jazz pianist Roberto Di Gioia, reach much farther: fizzing over careening Hammonds, James Jamerson-style bass and Supremes coos (Wounded Love), summoning a jagged Aretha Franklin-like chant (I Gotta Know) or smoothing off pain-wracked Houston bluesman C.S. Armstrong's rough edges (Be Here In The Morning). Five bonus tracks, including stringy stand-out The Show, sustain the momentum on a rousing affair that swoons, twinkles and pulses in all the right places.

Andy Cowan



R.E.M.

★★★★★

New Adventures
In Hi-Fi

CRAFT. **CD/DL/LP**

Expanded 25th anniversary outing for quartet's classic. Extras are disappointing.



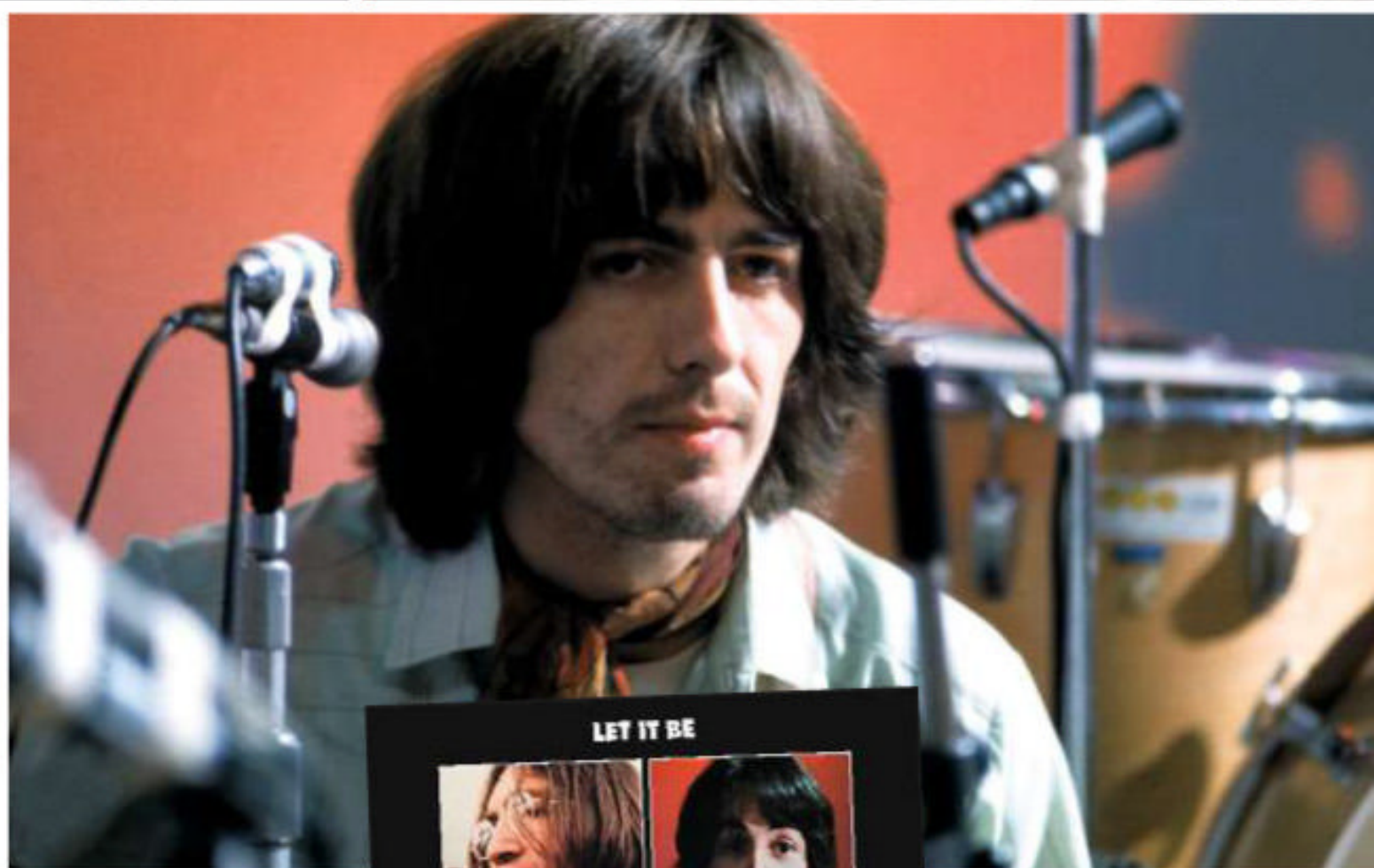
Absent from the road for the previous six years, R.E.M. certainly made up for it in 1995: 135 shows; one aneurysm (Bill Berry); intestinal surgery (Mike Mills); a hernia (Michael Stipe); plus a long-player mostly recorded at soundchecks and in dressing rooms along the way. *New Adventures In Hi-Fi* holds up well now, the residual echoes of *Monster's* grunge/glam overshadowed by the sound of a band in positive transition, experimenting with spacier ideas (the outstanding opener, How The West Was Won And Where It Got Us) that they would pursue, but not better, on 1998's post-Berry *Up*. All those works-in-progress on the road should have provided a wealth of alternate versions but, sadly, you won't find them here: CD2 consists of all previously released material, mostly live B-sides. Fun if you've never heard R.E.M. saunter through Wichita Lineman, but completists will see this one as a massive opportunity missed.

John Mulvey

Peter Millne M.33



Just the four of us:
The Beatles at
Twickenham Film
Studios, January 7, 1969.



Long way round

Super Deluxe Edition has five CDs including outtakes and the May 1969 Glyn Johns assembly of *Get Back*. By **Jon Savage**.

The Beatles

★★★★★

Let It Be

APPLE. CD/DL/LP

FOR WHAT was intended as a back to the roots exercise, *Get Back* became the most tortuous project in The Beatles' history. In the 16 months between the first day at Twickenham and the May 1970 release of *Let It Be*, they racked up well over 100 hours of recorded music and ran through four separate assemblies of the material: three by Glyn Johns that adhered to the documentary concept and the final controversially-finessed album.

As it happened, an idea with potential was overtaken by events. Between its inception and its completion, The Beatles squabbled over business, pulled *Abbey Road* out of the bag, began their solo careers, and publicly split up in April 1970. Started as an intended regeneration, it became a valediction: instead of *Get Back*, there was *Let It Be* – a dolorous plea for the cessation of conflict that appeared to comment on The Beatles' own demise.

This turbulence has retrospectively coloured the view of the whole 1970 music/book/film project, which is read as the document of a break-up rather than an

incomplete – and at times, fractious – attempt to do something new. For something begun in terms of simplicity, *Get Back/Let It Be* has become a complex maze: one that has already been through six iterations – if you count 2011's *Let It Be...Naked* and the 12 outtakes on *Anthology 3* – and now receives its seventh.

This special edition comes in the usual variety of formats. The super deluxe version contains four CDs and an extra four tracks on a fifth. Beginning with the album as originally released, it passes through two discs of outtakes: one roughly follows the course of the original album, the other introduces songs that point forward to *Abbey Road* and the solo years. The fourth full disc is Glyn Johns' second, May 1969 assembly of *Get Back*.

Let It Be might be the runt of the Beatles litter but it's half of a very good album. The best tracks – *Two Of Us*, *I've Got A Feeling*, *Get Back*, *Let It Be* – convey a warm, intimate feel that, combined with a relaxed, soulful backing, exemplify what could have been. There are a couple of generic exercises (*One After 909*, *For You Blue*), one great psychedelic anomaly (*Across The Universe*) and one outright chore – *The Long And Winding Road*, definitely not improved by Phil Spector's additions.

The outtakes discs are very much works in progress, as The Beatles chat and work their way through new songs: an eavesdrop into their process. At times they use old, familiar

numbers as a way of getting into the feel, as McCartney launches into a lounge piano version of *Please Please Me* to kickstart a run-

through of *Let It Be*. On the third disc, they launch into rudimentary takes of new material: *Gimme Some Truth*, *All Things Must Pass*, and *Abbey Road* songs like *Octopus' Garden* and *Something*.

What comes through is how true The Beatles were to the idea of going back to their youthful inspirations. It might have been suggested by The Band and Americana, but the roots on display here are thoroughly British: their early skiffle days in The Quarrymen and Johnny And The Moondogs, the impact of obscure, UK-released American R&B singles like Jimmy McCracklin's *The Walk*, and 1950s mass culture figures like the Carry On actor Charles Hawtrey and the music hall entertainer Wee Georgie Wood.

Nevertheless, *Let It Be* came off half cocked. The group were correct in not releasing the Glyn Johns assembly, with its interminable four-minute *Dig It*, but the Spector sweetenings sat ill with the initial concept. While there are no great revelations on these highly enjoyable discs – and no full rooftop concert – they lead to the conclusion that a great album could have been assembled out of the constituent parts. But, as its many versions attest, *Let It Be* is an album that will never be finished – a puzzle that will never be completely solved.

Stamina and command: the compelling Fela Kuti.

FILE UNDER...

Man of the World

London, LA, Nigeria, there were many stops on Fela Kuti's route to Afrobeat. By **Jim Irvin**.

IN 1958, teenaged Nigerian musician Fela Kuti enrolled at London's Trinity College Of Music as a trumpeter. He was a keen student, both at college and in the capital's jazz clubs, where he spectated and took part. That's where local boy Ginger Baker met him. "Fela used to come to sit in at the all-nighters in the Flamingo," Baker said in 2012. "He was playing trumpet then and he was good."

Fela started his own band, Fela Ransome Kuti & His Highlife Rakers, then returned to Nigeria in 1963 with a new band, Koola Lobitos, who signed to EMI. In 1967 he

began developing Afrobeat, the blend of funk, jazz, calypso and traditional Yoruba rhythms that would make his name. A trip to Los Angeles in 1969, where he encountered the Black Panthers, encouraged him to add politics to his music, and he went home, with the renamed Africa 70, to start releasing the radical music that would make him an important force in Nigerian culture. EMI arranged for him to revisit London and record in Abbey Road (still EMI Studios then). The resulting 1971 album, *Fela's London Scene* (Partisan) ★★★★★ is now receiving a

50th anniversary reissue. A raw-boned, compelling recording of just five tracks, it opens with J'Ehin J'Ehin, mostly bass, drums, percussion and Fela playing a lo-fi electric piano, until a brass section blasts out two-thirds of the way through. Egbe Mi O (Carry Me I Want To Die) begins with brass then introduces guitar which scrubs away at a single chord for most of the track's 13 minutes. Ten minutes in, there's an unexpected vocal melody, which Fela sings softly before expanding into a choral sing-along to include "everybody outside this record". It's a simple but masterful track.

Ginger Baker was involved, uncredited, in those sessions. When he sought respite from the rigours of his years with Cream, Blind Faith and Airforce, Baker went to Nigeria to hang out at Fela's compound. "We'd smoke lots and lots of NNG [Nigerian natural grass]. Laughter was very much a major part of Nigerian life in Lagos in the '70s," Baker says in Chris May's sleevenotes. He appeared on a few of Fela's records at the start of the '70s and would also occasionally sit in for Africa 70's celebrated drummer Tony Allen when Allen was indisposed on tour.

"The people loved seeing an Englishman in the band," Baker told May. "They couldn't believe it at first. Oyinbo [white man] drummer! They would come up and press money on my forehead. It was a mark of approval."

You can hear both drummers among the 14-piece band assembled on *Fela Ransome Kuti And Africa 70 Live! With Ginger Baker* (Partisan) ★★★★★ a single LP now bumped up to three sides with two bonus drum duets by Allen and Baker. (The longer of

these previously appeared on CD editions.) If you have fond memories of Baker's soloing on Toad with Cream you'll want to hear this bravura display. The main album is a terrific account of Africa 70 in concert, tight and precise with that drag in the groove explicit in much African music, a feel redolent of humidity and air pressure. In Tony Palmer's contemporary film, *Ginger Baker In Africa*, Baker and Fela meet in the city of Calabar, which gets 200 inches of rain a year. Fela is magnificent performing in a rain-soaked nightclub. The stamina and command he shows there are audible on this album. Beautifully recorded originally, and now faithfully restored, these fine examples of Fela's early power will also come in limited edition coloured vinyl pressings.



"A trip to Los Angeles encouraged Fela to add politics to his music."

Bernard Matuissiere

Black Francis

★★★★

07-11

EDSEL. CD

Nine-CD box of chief Pixie's last splurge of solo recordings.



After Pixies reformed, Charles Thompson ditched his second alias, Frank Black, and reverted to Black Francis for five solo studio albums, rarities collection *Abbabubba* and two live albums. 2007's *Bluefinger* and 2008 mini-album *Sv n F n g r s* are wiry garage rock, more stripped back than Pixies' mini-album debut *Come On Pilgrim*. His subsequent soundtrack to 1920 horror *The Golem* gave Francis licence to venture beyond raucous rock to dreamy psych, piano ballads and saxophone squawk; likewise, 2010's gripping *NonStop-Erotik*. Of the two live sets, 2008's *Utah* show – just voice and electric guitar – stirred in seven crowd-pleasing Pixies songs. Bypass 2011's relatively underwhelming collaboration with frequent co-writer Reid Paley, *Paley & Francis*, and 07-11 affirms that noughties Francis was a more potent force than his reputation suggests. And as he's only written for Pixies since, it's also a fitting epitaph for the man in Black.

Martin Aston

Heartbreakers

★★★★★

LAMF: The Found '77 Mixes

JUNGLE. CD/DL

Johnny Thunders' storied punk-era masterpiece – finally, as intended.



In early '77, Thunders was punk's most influential guitarist, and, in the immediate aftermath of his new quartet's stint on the Sex Pistols' Anarchy tour, the Heartbreakers spent a few chaotic weeks trying to capture their rollicking tunes in various London studios. There followed a six-month fiasco as their label, Track, went bust and successive mixes inexplicably came up muddy, including the ones released that October, dulling the impact of classics such as *Chinese Rocks* and *Pirate Love*, and ultimately splitting the band. In the mid-'90s, a different version had been assembled from rejected takes, which manager Lee Black Childers had 'liberated' from Track's abandoned offices, but here, 44 years on, are the original 'money shots', recently unearthed in co-producer/Track supremo Danny Secunda's attic, without the muddiness caused by a subsequent mastering fault. At last, without reservation, *LAMF* now sounds as it always should

Greg Helgeson

have – one of the most explosive records of the late '70s.

Andrew Perry

Brent Dowe And The Melodians

★★★★

Build Me Up/Pre-Meditation

DOCTOR BIRD. CD/DL

Brent Dowe's solo debut, an overlooked Melodians LP, and bonus tracks.



One of the most popular harmony groups in rock steady, The Melodians endured many ups and downs in the 1970s, causing lead singer Brent Dowe to pursue a solo career on the side. Sensual love song *Build Me Up*, recorded for Sonia Pottinger, was a breakthrough hit in 1973 that inevitably led to an album of the same name, with a strong underpinning of soul balladeering and a touch of country. *Pre-Meditation* saw the regrouped trio working at the Black Ark for Pottinger in 1975, this time on socially-conscious work like *Survival Is The Game* and *Na Ga Long So*, but the album was left unfinished, surfacing a few years later padded out by earlier hits. This double reissue adds 26 bonus tracks of varying quality, relying heavily on Dowe's standard love songs, mixed here with a few lesser-known conscious tunes.

David Katz

Various

★★★★★

People Get Ready: The Curtis Mayfield Songbook

KENT. CD/DL

Not to be confused with Shanachie's reissue of namesake '93 Curtis tribute.



This collection of interpretations of Curtis Mayfield songs spans 1961 to 2010, from The Impressions' *Gypsy Woman*, featuring Mayfield himself, of course, to *Hard Times* by John Legend. In between are 22 more tracks: some, such as Jan Bradley's *Behind The Curtains*, Gene Chandler's *Rainbow* and Major Lance's *Um Um Um Um Um* spotlight his role in the 1960s, developing Chicago soul sound; others, like Aretha Franklin's *Look Into Your Heart* and The Staple Singers' *Let's Do It Again*, highlight his '70s soundtrack work. The social conscience title track, meanwhile, provides Dionne Warwick with creative liberation: in Memphis with producer Chips Moman, freed from the pop constraints of Bacharach & David, Warwick is at her most soulful and honest.

Lois Wilson

FILTER ISSUES

Pure garbage: The Replacements (from left) Paul Westerberg, Chris Mars, Bob Stinson, Tommy Stinson.



What a waste!

The 'Mats' alcohol and chaos-fuelled debut turns 40.

By David Fricke.

The Replacements

★★★★★

Sorry Ma, Forgot To Take Out The Trash

RHINO. CD/DL/LP

FOR A few minutes, on the way to its release on August 25, 1981, The Replacements' debut album was called *Unsuitable For Airplay* – which it was, starting with side one, track one. “The light was green/So was I/The radio's blatin'/Turn that shit off!” singer-guitarist Paul Westerberg bellowed in *Takin' A Ride*, two minutes and 23 seconds of death-race frenzy with a neck-snapping hook. Another title on the table was *Power Trash*, coined by Westerberg, the band's songwriting captain, to describe the motley character of The Replacements' noise and mission. As he put it to me later over a few cold ones in a Minneapolis bar, “We take the best parts of punk, pop, rock'n'roll and blues without really having a feel for any of them. I don't know where our true roots lie.”

In this 40th birthday deluxe edition, *Sorry Ma, Forgot To Take Out The Trash* is all about roots, raw meat and roads not taken – not yet anyway. The original machine gun etiquette – 18 songs in 37 minutes with a fidelity that suggested it was all cut in even greater haste – has been extended with more than 80 tracks of demo labour, studio outtakes, basement frolic and club gig velocity. In large part, the extras affirm the obvious. *Sorry Ma...*, as issued in '81, was near-perfect delirium,



a rude, taut joy of protracted beer-blast adolescence (eg, that final title) mined with Westerberg's emotionally kinetic way with wrenched syntax and deceptively banal premise (the longing for a shop girl in *Customer*; his acidic memoir of an arena rock show, *I Bought A Headache*).

There is valuable discovery, however, in this density. You hear, in rough steps and long jumps, how hard The Replacements – Westerberg, drummer Chris Mars and the lethal family axis of guitarist Bob Stinson and teenage bassist Tommy Stinson, Bob's half-brother – worked to sound that volatile. A studio demo of *I Hate Music* has a bruising edge on the LP version; *Don't Turn Me Down*, an orphaned tune from the April 1980 demo that eventually led to the band's record deal, sounds like a hardcore spin on Jailbreak-era Thin Lizzy, right down to the harmonised guitars. And there is an instructive lo-fi fragment of Johnny's *Gonna Die* – Westerberg's candid assessment of a star-crossed idol, Johnny Thunders – played at unwisely high speed during a session in the Stinsons' basement. On the album, The Replacements pulled the brakes and played the song instead as raw, psychedelic anguish, a Midwest punk's dream of electric Laurel Canyon already alluding to the reach and changes on 1983's *Hootenanny* and '84's *Let It Be*.

Sorry Ma... was, in effect, a glorious dead end. Alcohol and chaos are not a career plan, and The Replacements never made another album like it. Growing up had its consequences too for the band. But this is how it started: innocence and impatience unchained, in every exuberant, rattling detail. And it's still unsuitable for airplay.



Twin Peaks

Together at last: the two spooky volumes of Radiohead's arena rock renunciation, 2000-2001, plus extras. **Danny Eccleston** logs on.

Radiohead

★★★★★

Kid A Mnesia

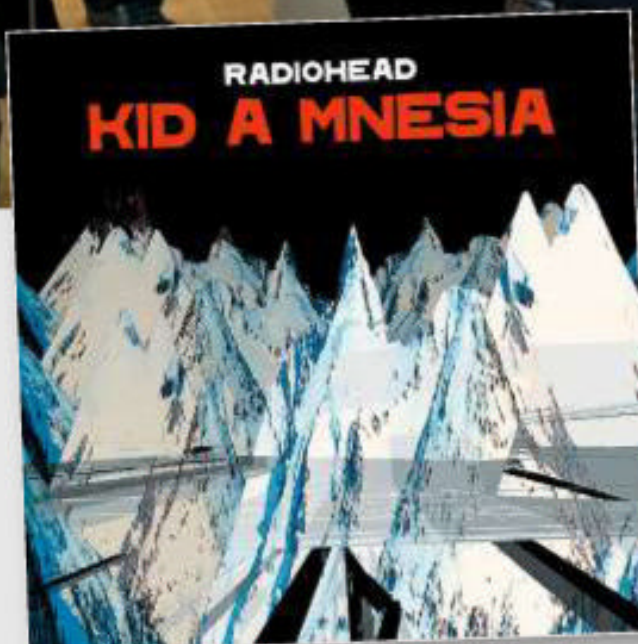
XL. CD/DL/LP

THE CHORUS of dismay that greeted Radiohead's *Kid A* on release in 2000 seems passing strange now its hybrid of electronic and traditional rock aesthetics is so ubiquitous. But at the time it offended two camps: those invested in the band's soaring anthems, and electronica aficionados irked by rock stars encroaching clumsily on their niche. And there was another problem for those who had seen Radiohead live earlier in the year: the most affecting and immediate new songs they were playing weren't on it. Fans were confronted with the ghostly glitching groove of *Everything In Its Right Place* and many were left scratching their heads.

Twenty years on, *Everything...* is now one of Radiohead's most popular live bangers and we know that those lost songs from 2000 weren't lost for long – destined, in fact, for 2001's *Kid A* companion *Amnesiac*. Back then, with the more organic-sounding *Pyramid Song*, *Knives Out* and *You And Whose Army?* in pride of place – the first-named easily in the Top 5 of all Radiohead songs – *Amnesiac*

felt like a corrective of sorts, with its slower 'acoustic' version of *Morning Bell* (contrasting with *Kid A*'s original, with its skittery, d'n'b-ish beats, in 5/4) arguably emblematic. But it also housed more radical gambits even than *Kid A*: the neurotic gamelan of opener *Packt Like Sardines In A Crushd Tin Box*; the nightmare labyrinth of *Pulk/Pull Revolving Doors*; the fritzing hard-disk ultra-melancholy of *Like Spinning Plates*...

Like all double albums (even one whose halves emerged months apart) *Kid A/Amnesiac* encouraged efforts to tracklist the perfect single disc, but as with all double albums, everyone's distillation was different. Smooshed together on this anniversary package, it's hard to put a cigarette paper between the two, or decide what's superfluous. Even their least lauded tracks – *Kid A*'s folky *In Limbo* or Eno-ish *Treefingers*; *Amnesiac*'s electric guitar étude, *Hunting Bears* – play vital roles, moments of lull amid the emotional intensity. Meanwhile, the furore over Radiohead's digital transformation masked another, more analogue innovation: the flowering of guitarist Jonny Greenwood's orchestrations. Defiantly modern but profoundly beautiful, his strings are the source of *Pyramid Song*'s bewitching depth and, from *Kid A*, *How To Disappear Completely*'s whirlpool of despair. You can enjoy the isolated string parts of both



Radiohead:
twisting
machines
to their will.

on *Kid A Mnesia*'s bonus disc, along with a previously unreleased *If You Say The Word* – a rich and velvety slice of alt-lounge rock, too rich, it seems, for the austerity of Radiohead's vibe of 2000/01 – and a solo acoustic guitar rendering of

Follow Me Around which finds a desperate Thom Yorke chased by an undead swarm of "Thatcher's children" in a rare outbreak of unambiguous polemic (in live versions at the turn of the last century, Yorke was heard to sing "Did you lie to us Tony? We thought you were different").

While *OK Computer* had proved inimitable – at once too grand and splenetic, perhaps too virtuosic, aspects exemplified all at once by *Paranoid Android* – *Kid A* and *Amnesiac* lit a path. If the musicians in Hot Chip, Animal Collective, MGMT and more had already envisioned a boundary-blind mélange of indie rock and electronica, then here at the very least was moral support. Purer electronica artists, too, saw the value in what Radiohead were contributing. Listen to James Holden's *The Inheritors* on this month's MOJO CD and hear his acknowledgment of Yorke and co's unique processing of his genre's pioneers, of Cluster and Boards Of Canada.

"I'd completely had it with melody," said Yorke in explanation of Radiohead's direction after *OK Computer*. "All melodies to me were pure embarrassment." But his renunciation was relative. Both these albums twisted machines to Radiohead's will, to their need to hear soulful songs singing in their wires. And they're resonating still.

KILIMANJARO PRESENTS

HONORING THE DAY THE MUSIC DIED
50TH ANNIVERSARY "AMERICAN PIE" TOUR

DON MCLEAN

SEPTEMBER 2022

SUN 11 CARDIFF ST DAVID'S HALL
TUE 13 IPSWICH REGENT THEATRE
WED 14 BIRMINGHAM SYMPHONY HALL
FRI 16 BATH FORUM
SAT 17 TORQUAY PRINCESS THEATRE
SUN 18 BOURNEMOUTH PAVILION THEATRE
TUE 20 BRIGHTON DOME
WED 21 SOUTHEAST CLIFFS PAVILION
FRI 23 MANCHESTER BRIDGEWATER HALL
SAT 24 GATESHEAD SAGE
SUN 25 GLASGOW ROYAL CONCERT HALL
TUE 27 EDINBURGH USHER HALL
WED 28 YORK BARBICAN
FRI 30 LEICESTER DE MONTFORT HALL

OCTOBER 2022

SAT 01 SHEFFIELD CITY HALL
SUN 02 LIVERPOOL PHILHARMONIC HALL
TUE 04 LONDON PALLADIUM

MY
VIP

VIP PACKAGES
AVAILABLE FROM
MYTICKET.CO.UK/VIP

MYTICKET.CO.UK | DONMCLEAN.COM

A KILIMANJARO PRESENTATION



marillion

the light at the end
of the tunnel tour

NOVEMBER 2021

SUN 14 HULL CITY HALL
MON 15 EDINBURGH USHER HALL
WED 17 CARDIFF ST DAVID'S HALL
THU 18 MANCHESTER BRIDGEWATER HALL
SAT 20 CAMBR **SOLD OUT** N EXCHANGE
SUN 21 BIRMINGHAM SYMPHONY HALL
TUE 23 LIVERPOOL PHILHARMONIC
WED 24 BATH FORUM
FRI 26 LONDON EVENTIM APOLLO HAMMERSMITH
SAT 27 LONDON EVENTIM APOLLO HAMMERSMITH

MYTICKET.CO.UK | MARILLION.COM

A KILIMANJARO & KNOWMOREPROMOTIONS PRESENTATION

FOY VANCE

— PRESENTS —

Signs of Life

— WITH SPECIAL GUESTS —
GARETH DUNLOP
— AND —
THE LATE HEAVY

MARCH 2022

25 YORK BARBICAN
27 BIRMINGHAM THE ALEXANDRA THEATRE
29 MANCHESTER BRIDGEWATER HALL
30 LONDON EVENTIM APOLLO HAMMERSMITH

MYTICKET.CO.UK | FOYVANCE.COM

A KILIMANJARO & COMMUNION PRESENTATION BY ARRANGEMENT WITH X-RAY

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT myticket.co.uk



Music is the message: (from left) Wayne Shorter, Lee Morgan, Jymie Merritt and Art Blakey in Tokyo, 1961.

Art Blakey & The Jazz Messengers

★★★★★

First Flight To Tokyo: The Lost 1961 Recordings

BLUE NOTE. CD/DL/LP

Legendary jazz drummer's band shines in the Land of the Rising Sun.

THERE WERE myriad incarnations of The Jazz Messengers during the group's 36-year lifetime, but none

perhaps as potent as the line-up at this concert, recorded during the group's maiden voyage to Japan, where Art Blakey is accompanied by trumpeter Lee Morgan, saxophonist Wayne Shorter, pianist Bobby Timmons and bassist Jymie Merritt. Driven by Blakey's indomitable swing, the band serves up high octane versions of some of their best-known numbers, including the gospel infused Moanin', Blues March, and a febrile



take on Dizzy Gillespie's exotic A Night In Tunisia. Although the thunderous drum solo that precedes the Messengers' version of Charlie Parker's Now's The Time shows that Blakey wasn't noted for his subtlety, his gentle accompaniment on Thelonious Monk's ballad Round Midnight, spotlighting Lee Morgan, reveals an exquisite and delicate sensitivity. An outstanding set.

Charles Waring

Various

★★★★★

Sacred Soul Of North Carolina

BIBLE & TIRE/MUSIC MAKER FOUNDATION. CD/DL

Sanctified sounds from the Tar Heel State.



The Glorifying Vines Sisters are one of the chief purveyors of North Carolina

sacred soul. Led by the indomitable shouter Alice Vines, they have been singing together for four decades and their rousing Tell It All To Jesus is one of the key tracks on this celebration of the region's quartet tradition. Vines is also behind this collection, booking the 11 groups featured into a makeshift storefront studio in downtown Fountain. Over eight days in early 2019, their affirmative testifying and joyous blessings are vividly captured. Vines' niece Melody Harper delivers a spine tingling *cappella* take on Amazing Grace; Faith & Harmony deliver the deliciously soulful We Will Work; Johnny Ray Daniels and Bishop Albert Harrison, meanwhile, use the blues to chase out the devil on Somewhere To Lay My Head and Shake Me respectively.

Lois Wilson

Diamanda Galás

★★★★★

Diamanda Galás

INTRAVENAL SOUND OPERATIONS. CD/DL

Avant icon's uncompromising second album. Vinyl version is promised soon.



Released by Berkeley, California's Metalingua imprint, and, like her debut

The Litanies Of Satan, made up of two, lengthy, excoriating essays, 1984's *Diamanda Galás* further established the San Diego-born diva's signature fusion of socio-religious lament and visceral, electronically infused gothic opera, informed by the literature of the Marquis de Sade and Antonin Artaud as much as by Galás's eastern Mediterranean heritage. The original side one-filling Panoptikon, a prescient treatise on imprisonment by technology, builds from inchoate bursts of static into a tremulous, vertiginous aria – Yoko Ono by way of Maria Callas – then serpentine through passages of eerie choral dissonance à la Ligeti's *Lux Aeterna*, processed, robotic goth-rap ("What is my name?") and primeval, animalistic growling. The ensuing Song From The Blood Of Those Murdered, sung in Greek and dedicated to the torture victims of the country's late-'60s junta, is equally mercurial, and as compelling as it is forbidding.

David Sheppard

Groundhogs

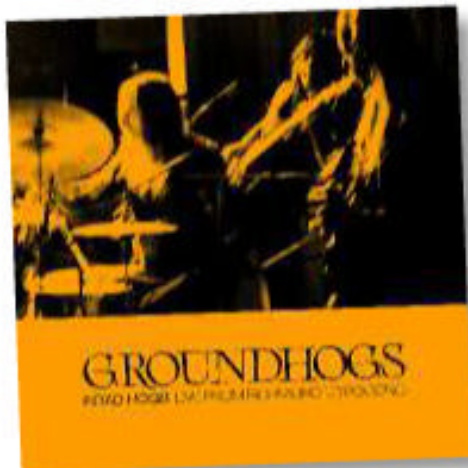
★★★★

Roadhogs: Live From Richmond To Pocono

FIRE. CD/DL/LP

Triple live archive of gonzo Groundhogs Mk1 at '69 prog-blues peak and in final hours.

The press release says these tapes have sat in the Warner archives for 50 years, filed alongside 1970's *Thank Christ For The Bomb* and 1972's *Who Will Save The World...?* The implication is, of course, What were they thinking?! However, although this is the definitive line-up of Tony McPhee's 'Hogs, with Pete Cruikshank on bass and Ken Pustelnik on drums, the sound quality is nowhere near what a label would have released in the mid 1970s. Now, fuzz, gnarl, rattle and whine are part of the experience. Captured at Richmond Athletic Ground in 1969 and on their 1972 US tour, this is 'Hogs, warts and all, from a rough-booted 1969 premiere of "new song" Cherry Red through to two – TWO! – separate 20-minute noise-blues covers of Muddy Waters' Still A



Fool which inhabit the admittedly otherwise unoccupied middle-ground between Harry Pussy and Blues Traveler.

Andrew Male



Baligh Hamdi

★★★★★

Modal Instrumental Pop Of 1970s Egypt

SUBLIME FREQUENCIES. CD/DL/LP

Respected Egyptian composer takes a trip on the wild side.



Having made his name as a songwriter for the biggest names in Egyptian music, in the late 1960s, Hamdi broadened his palette significantly by importing contemporary sounds from abroad and adding them to classical Middle Eastern orchestrations. If you ever thought rock bands experimenting with the East was the very vertex of exotica, this is a whole other level. His musicians – The Diamond Orchestra – were employed in search of a new modern hybrid just as other African nations were developing a new authenticity. On Ennai, he mixes hand drums with sitar and flute; zithers duet with electric guitars, sax and keyboards over majestic violin arrangements throughout Bambah; tempo change at whiplash speed; electric keyboards replicate the smells and sounds of the souq. If you've never heard of Hamdi

before, you'll wonder why Morricone and Barry got to be cult heroes first.

David Hutcheon



Pere Ubu

★★★★★

Pennsylvania

FIRE. CD/DL/LP

Remix of 1998's pop-toned but dark road LP from Ohio's avant-garage pioneers.



A sister album to 2002's none-more-black US travelogue *St Arkansas* – also remixed and reissued – the highway looms large on this caustic look back at small-town American life after years of exile. A spooked mystery tour through one-pump ghost towns, darkness seeps through the squeaky leftfield pop of Muddy Waters, spoken word menace of Woolie Bullie, Lynch-like travelogue of Perfume and Drive's pitch-perfect fantasy of heading into the sun to escape all the "existential claptrap". Sparingly textured with harmonicas, synths and Theremins, the return of original guitarist Tom Herman seemed to re-energise singer/leader David Thomas, whose doom-struck proclamations are so close-miked you can hear every gabbled breath. *Pennsylvania* captures the constantly reinventing Ubu at their coiled best, reframing their offbeat obsessions as thinking person's driving music.

Andy Cowan

Spiritualized

★★★★★

Let It Come Down

FAT POSSUM. LP

Spaceman reissue programme reaches the divisive final instalment.



At last available as a decent vinyl pressing, this unloved fourth Spiritualized

album introduced Jason Pierce to his subsequent career's chief bugbear: how to top 1997's *Ladies And Gentlemen, We Are Floating In Space*. It took him four agonising years to come up with his first effort, his original band having quit post-tour. Consequently, Pierce hired some 115 sessioneers to indulge his emerging passion for orchestral/choral overload (on three tracks, Low's Mimi Parker), around a core combo partly nicked off Julian Cope, with their space-rock FX staunchly dialled down. Sniffy reviews suggested that the painstaking arrangements had spawned a sterile, monomaniacal sound. In hindsight that's very harsh, because *Let It Come Down* has fuzzy edges and miraculous moments aplenty, and a handful of outright classics, including exquisite addict's anthem The Straight And The Narrow and the wondrous climactic gospel reading of Spacemen 3's Lord Can You Hear Me. Drop the needle and enjoy.

Andrew Perry

Hozumi Nakadaira



Graham Collier

★★★★★

British Conversations
MY ONLY DESIRE. **CD/DL/LP**

Gorgeous 1975 jazz suite by British jazz composer, on the 10th anniversary of his death.

In 1975, when Graham Collier was commissioned to compose this epic work for Swedish Public Radio, his British career was in the doldrums. Like many of his fellow musicians he had been hit hard when British labels dropped their jazz acts, and despite an excellent run of '60s and early '70s LPs (*Deep Dark Blue Centre*; *Down Another Road*; *Songs for My Father*) had to seek work overseas. This five-part suite, built around that one constant of British conversations, the weather, places trumpeter Harry Beckett and guitarist Ed Speight front and centre, backed by the incredible Swedish Radio Jazz Group. Like the British climate itself, it's a work of constant evolution and change, moving from languid apprehensive ballads to stormy, propulsive guitar rock, deep pastoral melancholy, modal patterns of rich colour and heavy big-band prog. The reissue equivalent of the sun emerging from behind a cloud.

Andrew Male



The Rolling Stones

★★★★★

Tattoo You (40th Anniversary Deluxe)

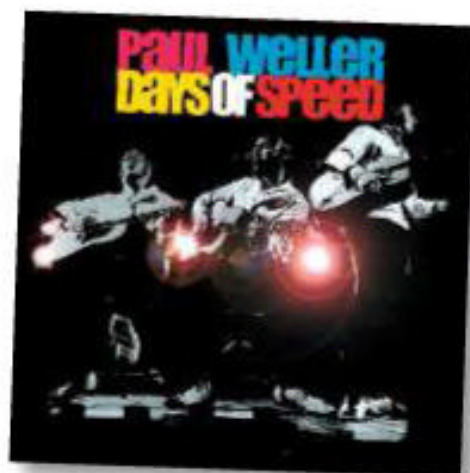
UNIVERSAL MUSIC. **CD/DL/LP**

Birthday edition of the Glimmer Twins and co's 1981 cut-and-paste job.

The hardback book that comes with this extensive re-boot of *Tattoo You* describes "the unorthodox making of a Rolling Stones classic." In 1981, the band had a US tour coming up and needed a new album, but Mick Jagger and Keith Richards weren't really talking. Instead, their associate producer Chris Kimsey rifled through outtakes and previously abandoned songs, some dating back to 1972.

Considering the sleight of hand, *Tattoo You* is a seamlessly fine Stones album, containing the evergreen live staple, Start Me Up, one peerless love song, Waiting On A Friend, and forgotten, ghostly-sounding *Goats Head Soup* offcut called Heaven. This bumper set adds nine "lost and found" rarities, including covers of The Chi-Lites' Troubles A' Comin and Dobie Gray's 1973 hit Drift Away, plus a 26-song live set from Wembley Stadium in '82, where the Stones' not-really new album's Black Limousine, among others, is given a test drive.

Mark Blake



Paul Weller

★★★★★

Days Of Speed

CRAFT. **LP**

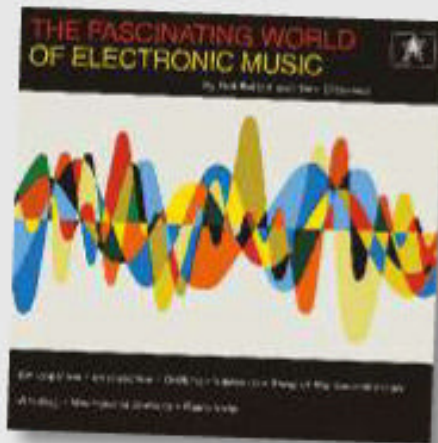
20th anniversary vinyl of acoustic double live album. Originals fetch £200 plus.

From March to July 2001, Paul Weller went on the road with just his acoustic guitar and a stool to sit on. The result, one of his best tours and this great live document cherry-picked from his UK and European dates. Weller clearly enjoyed the challenge of an unplugged setting, delivering what was then a rare career-spanning set with insouciant ease. From The Jam's English Rose and The Style Council's Headstart For Happiness to solo material including Above The Clouds, Wild Wood and the then recent There's No Drinking After You're Dead, these stripped down renditions reverberate with a quiet power and poetic beauty. Also on gatefold vinyl: Weller's sixth LP *Illumination*, from 2002, notable for the single It's Written In The Stars.

Lois Wilson

COMING NEXT MONTH...

Nirvana, Popol Vuh, David Bowie, Frank Zappa, Bruce Springsteen, Brian Wilson, The Black Keys, The Clean, The Waterboys, Sunn O))), Colin Blunstone, Bill Fay, Beverly Glenn-Copeland and more.



Kid Baltan and Tom Dissevelt

★★★★★

The Fascinating World Of Electronic Music

WE ARE BUSY BODIES. **LP**

From 1959, early electronics from Netherlands sound lab atom-smashes exotica, oscillator-wibble, cosmic drift, and more. Features earliest synth-pop-tune candidate Song Of The Second Moon. *IH*



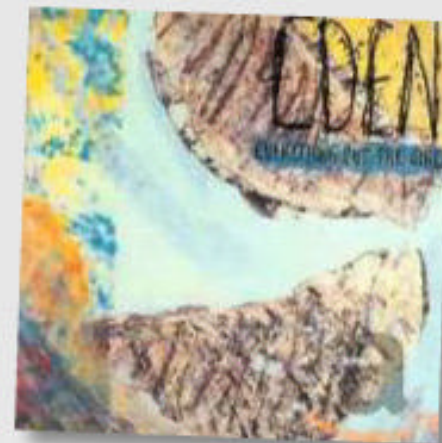
Echo And The Bunnymen

★★★★★

Heaven Up Here

RHINO. **LP**

In its 40th birthday year, the Liverpool quartet's first masterpiece, all emotive thunder and geometric cool, gets a 180g remaster in blue vinyl. Ditto the classic era's other LPs: *Crocodiles* (yellow), *Porcupine* (white), *Ocean Rain* (eternal transparent blue). *KC*



Everything But The Girl

★★★★

Edén

CHRYSLIS. **LP**

Thorn and Watt's 1984 debut on half-speed mastered vinyl. Before hook-ups with Massive Attack and Todd Terry, theirs was a world of literary and jazz-pop cool: slightly dour social realist lyrics set to breezy boss nova percussion and sleek horns. *JB*



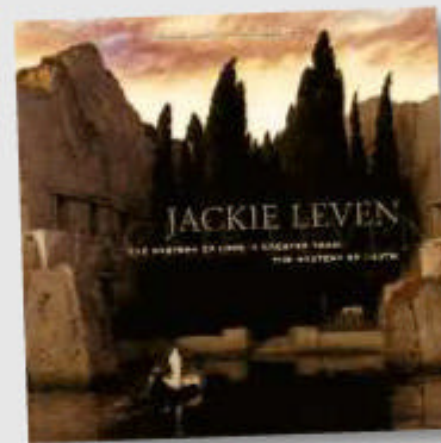
Sam Lee

★★★★★

Old Wow+

COOKING VINYL. **CD/DL**

An extension pack for last year's set of resonant folk, fusing ancient traditions with modern climate crisis dread. Of six additional tracks, Awake Awake Sweet England and John Barilecorn are both relocated to Stonehenge for Lee's recent project for English Heritage, Songs Of England. *JB*



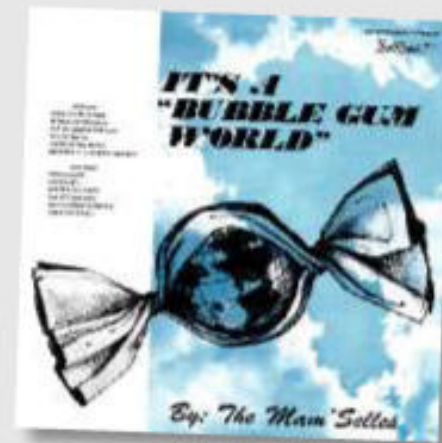
Jackie Leven

★★★★★

The Mystery Of Love Is Greater Than The Mystery Of Death

COOKING VINYL. **CD/DL/LP**

Prolific Kirkcaldy troubadour's 1994 solo debut. His experience of violence and drug addiction play out in heavy-lovely songs that showcase his folk guitar, gentle baritone and self-knowledge. Highlights: Call Mother A Lonely Field; Snow In Central Park. *JB*



The Mam' Selles

★★★★

It's A Bubblegum World

SUNDAZED. **CD/DL/LP**

1969 guitar-free private pressing of Buffalo, NY trio Sharon Walker and Janice and Pat Plinzke. Steady voiced and soulful, they instrument-swap organ, drums, bass, trumpet and percussion across garage-cabaret covers and one original. Their medley of Get Ready and Let The Sun Shine In is Peanuts soundtrack-worthy weird. *JB*



Pretenders

★★★★★

Pretenders

RHINO. **CD/DL/LP**

Chrissie Hynde-curated 3-disc edition of their textbook radio rock debut from 1979 (1981's great *Pretenders II* gets the same treatment). Adds B-sides, demos, BBC sessions and a previously vinyl-only live set from the Paradise Theater, Boston, 1980 (oddly, no Brass In Pocket here or on the original live album). *JB*



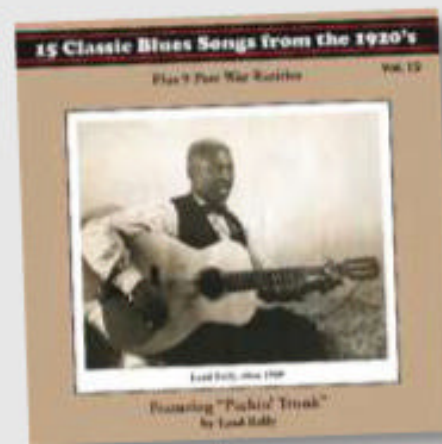
Static

★★★★

Toothpaste And Pills

THIRD MAN. **LP**

"Glam-punk demos and live recordings 1978-1981" from Negative Approach and Laughing Hyenas' John Brannon, who found his high school band's tapes in a cupboard at his mum's. Well worth hoarding, it's top punk rock grot, exemplified by Stoogian creepy crawl, Punk Nation. *JB*



Various

★★★★★

Blues Classics From The 1920s-1940s Vol. 19

BLUESIMAGES.COM. **CD**

Accompanying next year's Classic Blues Artwork From The 1920s calendar, a selection of restored 78s from big guns of the blues such as Memphis Minnie, Blind Lemon Jefferson and Bessie Smith, plus nine newly-discovered Leadbelly radio performances from 1945 and 1949. *IH*

RATINGS & FORMATS

Your guide to the month's best music is now even more definitive with our handy format guide.

CD COMPACT DISC **DL** DOWNLOAD **ST** STREAMING **LP** VINYL
MC CASSETTE **DVD** DIGITAL VERSATILE DISC **C** IN CINEMAS **BR** BLU-RAY

★★★★★
MOJO CLASSIC

★★★★★
EXCELLENT

★★★
GOOD

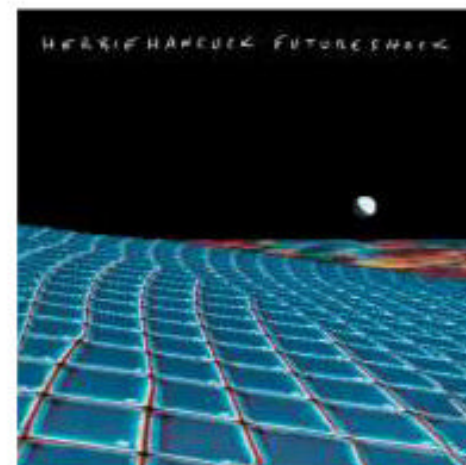
★★
DISAPPOINTING

★
BEST AVOIDED

☆
DEPLORABLE



Rockit man: Herbie Hancock, boldly going.



10 Herbie Hancock

Future Shock

COLUMBIA, 1983

You say: "Even if you don't like it, and I do, it stands out as distinct in his work." @JarndyceBooks, via Twitter

Effectively a collaboration with Bill Laswell of post-punk funk outfit, Material, and NYC turntablist DST, this is the sound of Hancock embracing the cutting edge of black popular music (rap, electro, scratching) and a record Columbia very nearly didn't release, believing it would alienate his core fans. If it did, it didn't matter because the lead single, Rockit, charted around the world and won five MTV awards, while the long-player became the fourth bestselling jazz record of all time. Removed from history and overexposure it sounds amazing: bright, metallic, edgy, futuristic, and a final 'screw you' to the jazz purists.



CAST YOUR VOTES...

In a change to the usual routine, next month we want your Bob Dylan Top 10 Books. Send selections via Twitter, Facebook, Instagram or e-mail to mojo@bauermedia.co.uk with the subject 'How To Buy Dylan Books' and we'll print the best comments.



4 Herbie Hancock

Thrust

COLUMBIA, 1974

You say: "Often overshadowed by *Head Hunters*, but it's even better, for my money." Dave Mandl, via Twitter

Inspired by Sly Stone, Buddhist chanting, African Hindewhu rhythms and The Pointer Sisters, Hancock's next direction put the emphasis on "straight-up funk". Retaining Bennie Maupin on sax, but with percussionist Bill Summers, bassist Paul Jackson and a brace of different drummers this new quartet were, said Hancock, "lighter, more playful, earthy, playful." Live, they gradually metamorphosed into a jazz-funk fusion supergroup, going platinum with their first LP, *Head Hunters*. But this follow-up is the one to seek. Structured more around Mike Clark's drums than Jackson's bass, this is *Head Hunters* but harder, faster, darker, heavier; inspired more by 1974 Miles Davis than 1969 Sly Stone.

Alamy, Getty

Herbie Hancock

Out of 41 studio LPs, 12 live sets, 62 compilations and five OSTs: the essence of controlled freedom. By **Andrew Male**.

THE THEME of Herbie Hancock's solo career is one of constant reinvention. The super-smart Chicago-born son of a lower middle-class family, raised in a multi-cultural neighbourhood, Hancock studied classical piano from the age of seven, with harmonic ideas influenced by vocal quartet The Hi-Lo's and arranger Gil Evans. After graduating from Grinnell College, Iowa in 1960, aged 20, with degrees in electrical engineering and music, he effectively combined both disciplines, approaching his piano playing with an analytical curiosity, rearranging and dissecting standard elements to produce different results. After moving to New York with jazz trumpeter Donald Byrd and releasing his first solo album, 1962's *Takin' Off*, featuring the eternal funk groove of Watermelon Man, he caught the attention of everyone from Freddie Hubbard and Roland Kirk to Eric Dolphy and Miles Davis. Davis enlisted Hancock

into his new quintet in 1964, allowing him a platform branch out into what they called "controlled freedom". It's this controlled freedom that Hancock has applied to his own work ever since, from the spiralling fluidity of mid-'60s Blue Note LPs *Emyrean Isles* and *Maiden Voyage* to the deceptively beautiful melodic complexities of 1968's *Speak Like A Child*, the out-of-body spirituality of his Mwandishi group, the hard-driving electro of *Future Shock* and the simple acoustic beauty of *The Joni Letters*.

While it's impossible to reduce such a career to a mere 10 albums (and we definitely didn't have room for any of the many LPs on which Hancock was a sideman) there are certainly records that have aged better than others, recordings that offer a more exciting gateway into his world than others, and that's what we've tried to do here. If a familiar record isn't immediately visible, chances are it will be mentioned in relation to one that is. For, if ever there was an artist who has too many great records to fit into a MOJO How To Buy, it's Herbie Hancock.

"With degrees in electrical engineering and music, he combined both disciplines."



9 Herbie Hancock

River: The Joni Letters

VERVE, 2007

You say: "Hancock ruminates elegantly over Joni's song-book... incredible vocalists." Jaime Bilbao, via Facebook

After 2005's *Possibilities*, which saw Hancock working with Christine Aguilera and Annie Lennox, his next idea was to explore the concept of the lyric itself. Collaborating with Joni Mitchell, who he'd first met on her 1979 *Mingus* LP, Hancock developed what he called "her songs through my prism", finding hidden rhythmic and harmonic jazz patterns and drawing them out with the help of vocalists such as Norah Jones, Tina Turner, Corinne Bailey Rae, Leonard Cohen and Joni herself. It won the Best Album Grammy in 2008 but don't let that deceive you; beneath the prettiness lie complex, interconnected filigree patterns of a rare meditative beauty.



8 Herbie Hancock

Empyrean Isles

BLUE NOTE, 1964

You say: "If true jazz is the art of acoustic improvisation then this is a masterclass in true jazz." Belishabeacon, via mojo4music

A quintessential post-bop LP centred around the cool modal groove of Cantaloupe Island but moving into areas complex, ambitious and experimental. Hancock's piano playing is dazzling, incorporating everything from simple skeletal frameworks for Freddie Hubbard's masterful cornet to light, playful dancing and wild, frantic soloing that borders on the egotistical. Apart from the aforementioned Cantaloupe Island and two beautiful mournful bass solos from Ron Carter, it's also a bright, busy yet somewhat enervating album with a 14-minute closer, The Egg, encapsulating the group at both its most euphoric, lyrical and exhausting.



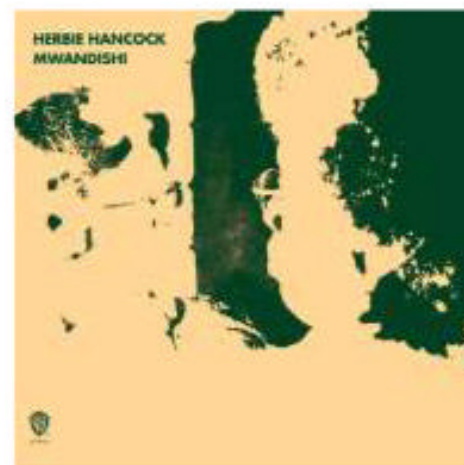
7 Herbie Hancock

Gershwin's World

VERVE, 1998

You say: "A deceptive, intelligent history lesson in jazz and race, but beautiful with it." Clare Hobbs, via e-mail

Reluctant to venerate a white composer who appropriated black musical styles (the original idea came from his new label bosses at Verve), Hancock deconstructed and rebuilt songs like Fascinating Rhythm and It Ain't Necessarily So, adding African rhythms, snatches of Ravel, and Ellington-style orchestral jazz. It's a consistently engaging record, finding depth and complexity in tunes faded through history and overfamiliarity, and quietly but firmly reappropriates what Gershwin took from the African American community. Stevie Wonder and Chick Corea guest, but it's the two exquisite covers with Joni Mitchell on vocals that most impress and point the way to 2007's *River: The Joni Letters*.



6 Herbie Hancock

Mwandishi: The Complete Warner Bros Recordings

WARNER BROS, 1994

You say: "Crossings. The second instalment of the Mwandishi period is where the stars align for me." James McKenzie, via Twitter

This discount double CD has the three LPs Hancock cut in his short stay at Warner Bros. *Fat Albert Rotunda*, recorded for a Bill Cosby 1969 animated TV special, finds HH and co playing instrumental soul funk of the highest order. The second, *Mwandishi*, is the first incarnation of his visionary "future jazz" sextet with Eddie Henderson on trumpet, Julian Priester on trombone, Buster Williams on bass, Bennie Maupin on bass clarinet and flute, and Billy Hart on drums. Last, but not least, *Crossings*, has the Mwandishi collective operating at an almost spiritual level of telepathic awareness.



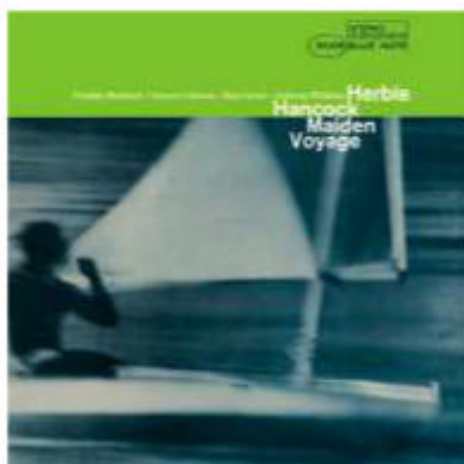
5 Herbie Hancock

Inventions & Dimensions

BLUE NOTE, 1963

You say: "Piano, bass and Latin percussion... Distinctively his own sound, loose, improvised. You'll never tire of this one." David Mayocchi, via Facebook

From the motorik hustle and rustle of opener Succotash, to the dashing proto-techno urgency of A Jump Ahead, this is a streamlined killer of an LP, Hancock tight and fast, using the piano to explore rhythm, melody, and the economical use of space, backed by Paul Chambers' dubby bass, Willy Bobo's tight rimshot drums and the Latin percussion of Osvaldo Martinez. Long dismissed by snooty jazz purists as a failed experiment, it deserves to be rediscovered, if it hasn't already been, by a new generation of listeners and musicians raised on rhythm, repetition and beat.



3 Herbie Hancock

Maiden Voyage

BLUE NOTE, 1965

You say: "Glorious from beginning to end." Brendan Foster, via Facebook

Recorded by what was effectively the Miles Davis Quintet (Hancock, saxophonist George Coleman, bassist Ron Carter, drummer Tony Williams) plus Freddie Hubbard on trumpet, the keyboardman's fifth release for Blue Note was conceived as a concept album based around spiral structures and the theme of ocean travel. As a result, *Maiden Voyage* is a breezy and seductive affair, best listened to as one single hypnotic journey, with Hancock's hard-bop piano held aloft by the gentle wash of Tony Williams' cymbals and the smooth rudder of Ron Carter's bass with Freddie Hubbard's trumpet and George Coleman's sax emulating the swirling winds and scudding clouds overhead.



2 Herbie Hancock

Sextant

COLUMBIA, 1973

You say: "I remember picking up a CD reissue in the old Virgin Megastore in Glasgow because, of the HH in stock, it had the best cover. It blew me sideways." Caroline McKenzie via Twitter

After three "far out" albums for Warners he felt weren't quite hitting the mark (see No. 6), Hancock signed to Columbia and pushed his Mwandishi groove into another universe. Utilising synthesizers throughout, and putting in months of rehearsal on fast, complicated arrangements, the group (Bennie Maupin, Eddie Henderson, Julian Priester, Buster Williams, Billy Hart) created what the leader called "a beautiful structure of sound", a soaring blend of intergalactic funk, evil jazz, heavy rock and proto-techno. Its commercial failure led Hancock in another direction, but the LP is a high-water mark of '70s space jazz.



Herbie Hancock

Speak Like A Child

BLUE NOTE, 1968

You say: "Acoustic, with lean orchestration and featuring Hancock as the only soloist throughout the entire album. A lifetime favourite album of his, and in my Top 10 favourite albums of all time. It's that good." Ron Robinson, via Twitter

On his penultimate Blue Note LP, Hancock attempted to capture the shifting colours and harmonious grace of Gil Evans' arrangements for Miles Davis but with "the smallest number of horns possible". Intending to soundtrack "a bright future" amid an America of riots and upheaval, Hancock enlisted Jerry Dodgion on alto flute, Thad Jones on flugelhorn and Peter Phillips on bass trombone, and with a rhythm section of Ron Carter and Mickey Roker created what is arguably his most beautiful acoustic work. Rather than working with definite chord patterns, Hancock creates a complex interweaving of melodies, scales and colours that simultaneously harks back to the world he was leaving while pointing towards his mind-expanding electronic compositions of the early '70s.

NOW DIG THIS



There are so many more paths to explore with solo Hancock including the jazz-funk and disco records he made between *Thrust* and *Future Shock*, best of which are 1975's *Man-Child*, 1980's *Mr Hands*, *Secrets* from 1976 and the killer live LPs, *Flood* and *VSOP*. We're still waiting for the definitive Herbie Hancock documentary, but the next best thing is arguably his 2014 autobiography, *Possibilities*. You should also check out the footage of his Mwandishi group, playing live on French TV in 1972 and a series of live Headhunters performances from 1974 that are supremely powerful.



This won't hurt a bit: The Very Things' Rob Dallaway (front) and (rear, from left) The Shend and Disney Time.



CREDITS

Tracks: The Conqueror/Down The Final Flight/The Bushes Scream While My Daddy Prunes/Information/Wall Of Fir/World Of Difference/Message From Disney Time/Shearing Machine/Phillips World Service/Laboratory Series No. 2 (on flexidisc, credited to DcL)

Personnel: The Shend (lead vocals and bass), Rob Dallaway (guitar, bvs, keys, samples), Disney Time (drums)

Producer: The Very Things, Dave Morris (engineer).

Release: August 1984

Recorded: Prakky Rooms, Worcestershire

Chart peak: n/a
Available: streaming services

Boy Chernobyl on tour," says Dallaway (during gigs the drummer was able to get up and walk slowly around his entire kit without missing a beat). Shend, meanwhile, wore white gloves in honour of "Mickey Mouse, magicians and toffs."

Then, in August 1985, The Bushes Scream While My Daddy Prunes got a new lease of life when Channel 4 producer and fan Chris Phipps commissioned a loopily sinister black and white film of the song to be shown on pop show The Tube. Directed by Gavin Taylor, who also helmed U2 Live At Red Rocks and Queen At Wembley, the 16mm clip showed the group playing at the ruined Hulne Priory and lurking in a vintage Ford Prefect van on a suburban street of 1930s houses in Newcastle. One Billy Benson – a mystery man of whom Shend can only say, "he turned up for the audition with a plastic bag full of jam sandwiches and proceeded to eat them, even during the actual audition" – played the doomed gardener/father figure.

"It was glorious fun," says Shend.

"At the time it was the most expensive film The Tube had shot. Tyne Tees were clearing out their cupboards in the '90s and offered us the 16mm original to buy for a ludicrously large amount of money. We couldn't afford it, so it was destroyed, apparently."

John Peel remained a fan, but 1987's taut, polished six-tracker *Motortown* would be the last album by the group. "I think it was hard to pick ourselves up after *Motortown* wasn't the massive commercial success the label thought it might be," says Dallaway.

Thereafter Dallaway and Holland formed Hit The Roof, while Shend formed Grimetime: as well as writing for the music press, he also turned to acting, appearing on *Lovejoy*, *Casualty*, *Emmerdale* and *Doctor Who* spin-off *Torchwood*, among other credits. Since 2009 he has led a re-formed line-up of The Cravats and plays in "electrodada" outfit Anzahlung with Cravats bassist Joe 91. Disney Time is now a respected soul DJ. Could The Very Things rise from the tomb?

"I've been working on a new version of the old wheels," says Dallaway, who also plays with his project Silverlake. "Same chassis, new bodywork, big engine, noisy. I'm very excited, but having to be patient, hoping it will be ready to unveil soon."

The Shend, who is not involved with this new audio-visual chapter of

The Very Things, remains upbeat. "As with all our projects we firmly believed, surely, this is the one that'll lead to pop stardom," he reflects. "We had a saying, 'Blimey, we'll be on Top Of The Pops next week!'," which one of us would say in a jocular manner at the time of every release, even when Top Of The Pops had long ceased to exist. I still do."

Ian Harrison

The Shend's book *Rub Me Out* is available at www.rotatorvinyl.bandcamp.com/merch

Shrub Me Crazy

Stirring from rock's tomb of oblivion, Midlands garage punk-Dada. Help!

The Very Things

The Bushes Scream While My Daddy Prunes

REFLEX, 1984

'SHEND' IS an Old English word meaning to put to shame, ruin and confusion. Redditch youngster Chris Harz first heard it on word-based TV panel show *Call My Bluff*, and adopted it as his artistic alter-ego. "I added the definite article 'The'," he explains, "as I was the only one."

This striving for uniqueness would extend to The Cravats, the Beefheart/Pere Ubu-charged punks formed the day after bassist-voice Shend and his guitarist-vocalist neighbour Rob Dallaway saw The Stranglers play Brum punk nexus Barbarella's on June 1, 1977. Recording two albums, seven singles and four John Peel sessions, Dallaway characterises their time as, "five years of bloody-mindedness, noise and weirdness... and spectacular career mismanagement. We didn't stop doing stuff, we just needed a new vehicle."

In 1983, that new vehicle roared into life. Shend and Dallaway initially toyed with the Electric Prunes-inspired name The Bushes Scream While My Daddy Prunes, but went with The Very Things instead. Piqued by Dada, '50s sci-fi celluloid and *Nuggets* garage primitivism, they resolved to turn on the tap of creativity and let it flow as it may. "We both had a love of '60s garage band psych," says Shend, who took over as frontman, "but rather than the American drawl, I decided to sing like Noël Coward meets Peter Cook meets Viv Stanshall, which suited Rob's lyrics and me perfectly."

The Very Things' abnormal first single The Gong Man was released on Crass's Corpus Christi label in late 1983. From then until early '84 they recorded their debut album using a mobile studio at their 24-hour access

rehearsal room in a soundproofed barn in Worcestershire. Some songs were pre-prepared by Dallaway while others grew from jams, with discordant surf guitars and Shend's gnarly bass lines joined by drummer Robin 'Disney Time' Holland's pounding back-to-front playing.

"It was all entirely harmonious," says Dallaway of recording, "although I was probably a bit bossy to work with then, with a 'vision' of how the album should be shaped, which was probably a bit annoying for everyone else."

Tension is inescapable on *The Bushes Scream While My Daddy Prunes*, which remains rich with the scissoring sounds of psychosis, bludgeoning primitivism and Freudian terror. Samples from *The Outer Limits*, *The Prisoner*, 1953 movie *It Came From Outer Space* and more are stitched in, as is, seemingly, Radio 2 DJ Brian Matthew: strange, terminal songs involve the dead talking, nuclear disaster zones, Men In Black and other shouts into the void. Rumbling, grinding and full of dark mirth, it suggests a British version of The Cramps fronted by Leo Baxendale's comic villain Grimly Feendish. Finished in early 1984, its sleeve featured a photographed-off-the-TV image from 1978 movie *The Medusa Touch*, of a priest praying his last as Richard Burton's ESP-sociopath causes a cathedral to collapse.

The clangorous title song – sparked by a newspaper story about a landowner who burnt down his country pile when trying to rid it of moles, and still great for scaring the kids – was an indie chart success, and the band hit the road.

Over the years there were three European trips, when they played Berlin with Crime & The City Solution, supported Michael Nyman in Vienna and stayed with Yello's Dieter Meier in Zurich, visiting Dada's birthplace the Cabaret Voltaire. "Young Disney is a force of nature. We called him



"Blimey, we'll be on Top of The Pops next week!"

THE SHEND

All types of memorabilia
including vintage posters,
t-shirts and clothing, promo shop
displays, handbills, tickets, tour
laminates and much more!!!



To Advertise in

MOJO

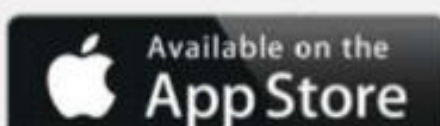
Classified

Please call Ben Peck on
01733 363206

GET MOJO ON YOUR DIGITAL DEVICES...

SUBSCRIBE TODAY FOR
GREAT **DIGITAL DEALS**
IN THE APP

- ★ Download issues
in seconds
- ★ Access back
issues instantly
- ★ Read offline
anytime,
anywhere
- ★ Read issues
across
different
devices



MOJO RECORD STORE DIRECTORY



Vinyl Eddie

An Aladdin's Cave of rarities,
collectables and new vinyl awaits.

86 Tadcaster Road, York, YO24 1LR
www.vinyleddie.co.uk 07975 899839



Fish Records

New vinyl and CDs plus pre-loved vinyl.
Wide selection with particular specialism in
roots and Americana music.

Unit 2, Crown Courtyard, Crown Street,
Stone, Staffordshire, ST15 8UY
www.fishrecords.co.uk 01785 818847



The Vinyl Whistle

A classic indie record shop, with four
rooms of vinyl in the heart of Headingley
serving coffee, beer and live music.

12 Otley Road, Headingley,
Leeds LS6 2AD
www.vinylwhistle.co.uk 0113 4260588



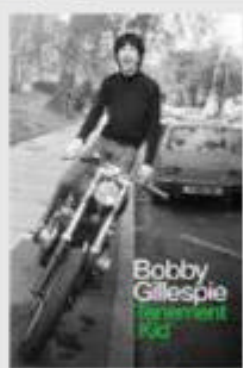
Five Rise Records

We are a physical and
online record store, run by music
lovers for music lovers.

30C Park Road, Bingley,
West Yorkshire, BD16 4JQ
www.fiveriserecords.co.uk 01274 512867

**TO ADVERTISE PLEASE CALL
MAX ON 01733 366405**

"Visionary purity": Bobby Gillespie has been possessed by the Holy Spirit.



WHAT WE'VE LEARNT

- Turning up for his first gig on bass with The Wake – supporting label-mates New Order, at Bristol's Trinity Theatre in February 1982 – without a bass guitar, Gillespie asked Peter Hook if he could borrow his. After much ribbing, the debutant plugged in and was almost floored by Hook's "thunderous Thor-like Viking bass sound".
- After trying out singing alongside Jim Beattie in a proto-Primal Scream, the pair advertised locally for a 'proper' singer. After one hopeless audition, they decided Gillespie should stick at it, but later found out that the JAMC's Jim Reid had seen the ad and wanted to apply, but was dissuaded by his brother William, then writing the songs for *Psychocandy*.
- Before touring *Screamadelica*, Gillespie asked Creation's Alan McGee for funding to buy the ingredients for pure MDMA, which guitarist/chemistry graduate Andrew Innes would then cook up in his bathtub, and the band would give to fans at shows. Even McGee refused to sign that one off.

Obviously for believers

Primal Scream chief's memoir of a pauper's life transformed by punk. By **Andrew Perry**.

Tenement Kid

★★★★★

Bobby Gillespie

WHITE RABBIT. £20

A MUSIC PRESS cover-star for 30 years now, Bobby Gillespie has always filled Primal Scream interviews with fervent pronouncements on rock'n'roll, as opposed to autobiographical revelations, to guard his mystique. Now aged 59, here he finally divulges all that withheld information, laying

bare his personal journey, from childhood poverty in Glasgow, through to Damascene punk conversion, near-accidental musicianship and the final chapter's hilariously chaotic assembly of 1991's *Screamadelica*.

This end marker was, of course, before Primal drug habits spiralled, but readers will still be astonished by the detail in his memoir, the extraordinary rolling energy in his prose (entirely self-penned, too), and his warmth, gratitude and performerly wisdom.

Gillespie grew up, as per the title, in a grim tenement in Springburn, the whole family in one bedroom, with a shared outhouse, until the block was

demolished during Edward Heath's late-'60s slum clearances. His father, a printworker and SOGAT branch secretary, dominates the early pages: young Bobby's "worship" of his dad's socialist principles – consorting with Arthur Scargill and Gordon Brown; sending food lorries for striking miners – prevails undimmed, even after Bob Sr's drinking led to marital arguments.

"I carried a lot of shame," Bob Jr admits of his parents' fights, "I learnt to dissociate, become disengaged," which he never understood until his addiction counselling in the 2000s.

Undiagnosed depression led him to a razor-wielding crisis at the bathroom mirror, aged 17. "I was ready for punk," he says, and begins a cascade of pop cultural discoveries, from Bolan, Bowie and a life-changing Thin Lizzy gig, soon superseded by God Save The Queen ("like I'd been possessed by the Holy Spirit") and incendiary Clash shows.

The way Gillespie writes about music's intoxicating buzz is inspirational, and you're pulled along on his minutely plotted journey from apostolic listening to acting out punk's DIY impulse: while roadie-ing for Altered Images, he depped on drums in front of pint-hurling Middlesbrough skinheads ("my baptism of fire"), then became bassist with Factory signings The Wake, but was fired after walking off stage mid-song, bored.

It's a good 200 pages until we get to the '60s-pop-fixated Primals ("we aimed to scramble people's senses with beauty"), connecting with brothers Jim and William Reid and, after a terrifying acid trip together, joining The Jesus And Mary Chain on drums.

Recalled in flagrantly homoerotic lads-together snapshots, the JAMC "were a conduit of hate, every single gig was freefall", but for Gillespie himself it was a necessary exorcism, and a lesson in "visionary purity", which led to the doomed, Marshall-powered incarnation of Primal

Scream around their second album, after which the planets aligned under a hailstorm of ecstasy for *Screamadelica*.

Some readers may find it all preposterous, the reams of political screed, narcotic misadventure and gonzo testifying. But much like Julian Cope's *Head On*, Tenement Kid's joy is in its undeviating belief in rock iconography. For those 'on the bus', its 430-odd pages are a thrilling antidote to the Nick Hornby novel

High Fidelity's portrayal of pop obsession as a saddo's pursuit. Here, it's reaffirmed as a secret life for heroes, whose dreams and high ideals can miraculously become a unifying reality.

"We aimed to scramble people's senses with beauty."

BOBBY GILLESPIE



From Manchester With Love: The Life And Opinions Of Tony Wilson

★★★★★
Paul Morley
FABER. £20

583-page doorstopper concerning the author's mentor, and more.

Written by Paul Morley on-and-off over a decade, and finally published 14 years after its subject's death, *From Manchester With Love* is as close to an official Tony Wilson biography as we're likely to get, given Wilson's nurturing of Morley since his '70s fanzine-writing days. Morley viewed the task as "both a privilege and a punishment", and – underlining the fact that this is far from a hagiography – notes that Wilson "could be terribly nice, and quite obnoxious", painting him as a motivator, wind-up merchant, intellectual and "bullshitter" (the latter two often linked). A mix of biography, oral history, memoir and tangential history lessons, its non-linear approach works well. Steve Coogan chips in to accurately describe Wilson as an "intergenerational figure", a newsreader being taunted at punk gigs, while Richard Madeley remembers his co-presenter's response to the "Tony Wilson is a wanker" graffiti that appeared all over Manchester: "It's a fair comment."

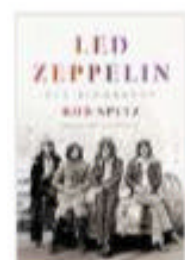
Tom Doyle



Led Zeppelin: The Biography

★★★★★
Bob Spitz
PENGUIN. £30

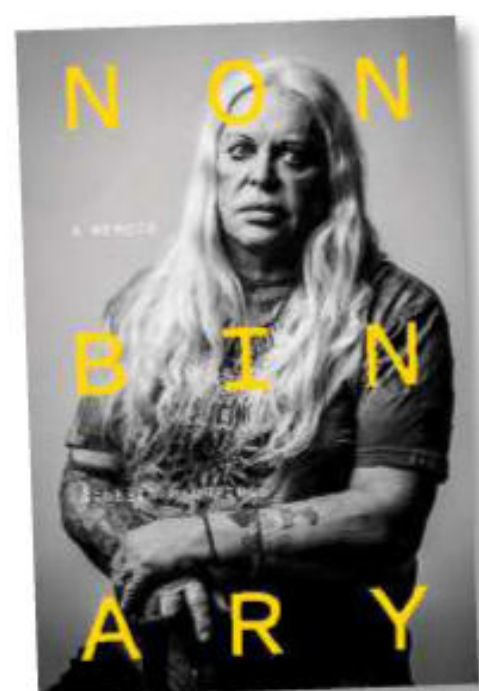
The 'biography' maybe too bold a claim, but certainly a major Zep book.



Deep into Spitz's unexpurgated, suitably epic tome, there's a telling moment when Hipgnosis's Aubrey Powell discusses their logo for Led Zeppelin's Swan Song label. "I found it strange," he says, "[that] nobody said, 'Icarus

flew too close to the sun... and got burnt.'" True enough, *The Biography* captures Zeppelin's mythic reach, but also that dissolute plunge into darkness which has become more troubling with each successive telling. Accounts of Peter Grant henchman John Bindon's sickening ultra-violence stay with you, and a blurb quote citing the book as "a serious contribution to the #MeToo canon" seems fanciful or at least disingenuous. Spitz is great at teasing out little-known details (Dusty Springfield was instrumental in Jerry Wexler signing Zeppelin to Atlantic; Zep covered Cliff and The Shadows' Bachelor Boy live; Jimmy Page envisaged The Crunge having its own dance moves), but there is also mention of Sandy Denny harmonising with Robert Plant on Gallows Pole, which is surely an error?

James McNair



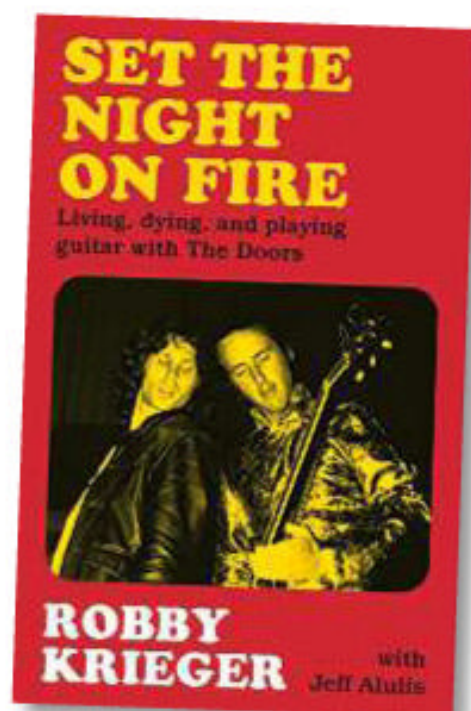
Nonbinary – A Memoir

★★★★★
Genesis P-Orridge
ABRAMS. £19.99

Memories of late Throbbing Gristle founder and 'occultural engineer'.

Working to the dictum "See a cliff: jump off", Genesis P-Orridge's refusal to be neatly boxed was a constant – whether staging student sit-ins or updating Burroughs' cut-ups to challenge received wisdom in numerous dole-funded creative pursuits. While covering their daily mission to subvert powered-up hippy collective COUM Transmissions, noise pioneers Throbbing Gristle, Psychic TV and magick cult Thee Temple Ov Psychick Youth, *Nonbinary* rides roughshod over the allegations of gaslighting and abuse in Cosey Fanni Tutti's frank 2017 memoir, *Art Sex Music*, dismissing her as a "party girl" while claiming TG's musical victories as P-Orridge's alone. A ceaseless name-dropper, prone to grandeur and self-aggrandisement (early on P-Orridge calls the Queen Moriarty to their Holmes), the book may be low on levity – it was written while dying of myelomonocytic leukaemia – but it's still a compelling read, the body-altered 'Pandrogyné' submitting their revisions as the lights slowly dim.

Andy Cowan



Set The Night On Fire

★★★★★
Robby Krieger
with Jeff Alulis
WHITE RABBIT. £16

The Doors guitarist on Jim Morrison and more.

"Robby! This is God speaking!" is the memorable first sentence of *The Doors'* guitarist's memoir. The deity speaking was Jim Morrison, the brilliant, charismatic and successfully self-destructive singer. Everyone remotely connected to the '60s band have written reminiscences of the Lizard Kingdom, but this is one of the very best. Krieger relays untold anecdotes (Dylan and Elvis were fans) and he's ribaldly funny (keep an eye out for "Elephant Dick"). When you consider the Quiet Door mastered flamenco guitar and Indian music and wrote *Light My Fire*, his sharp wit fits. Krieger's breakdown of the band's classics by musical and lyrical sources is fascinating, as is his revelation that he became a junkie in middle-age. Jimbo continually hovers, especially after he's dead and Robby repeatedly tries to move past his wildly successful youth. A well-told classic tale.

Michael Simmons

Paint My Name In Black And Gold

★★★
Mark Andrews
UNBOUND. £25

Some boys wander: throwing light and shade on dark lords The Sisters Of Mercy.

Helped by over 80 interviewees – many blessed with an eye for the absurd – writer Mark Andrews deftly charts the transit of goth lodestar The Sisters Of Mercy. Starting in the grubby bubble of the late-'70s Leeds scene that allowed Oxford dropout Andrew Eldritch (formerly Ely Bowie-obsessive Andy Taylor) to hatch his schemes, the author displays a fan's reverence while catching the tension between the singer's arch *froideur* and his bandmates' vomit-stained larks. There are amusing snapshots of Eldritch's amphetamine logic – waiting for a mouse with an air rifle, Letrasetting the lyric sheet for the Reptile House EP, conducting a fencing duel with Flesh For Lulu's Rocco Barker – but his band's cool reaction to their leader's speed-ravaged collapse while making 1985's *First And Last And Always* indicates the



dysfunctional band dynamic. It's not a wholly heroic tale, but as a record of a distinctive leather-trousered world, it will entertain anyone with a bottle of black dye lurking in their past.

Victoria Segal



The Storyteller – Tales Of Life And Music

★★★★★
Dave Grohl
SIMON & SCHUSTER. £20

Episodic memoir proving Grohl to be an engaging yarn-spinner.



Not one to sit idle for long, Dave Grohl admits that having nothing to do during lockdown sent him into an "existential tailspin". Pulling himself out of it, he began writing stories, posted to Instagram, that grew into this near-400-page autobiography. And Grohl certainly has plenty tales to tell, whether it be concerning his first and only (failed) jazz drumming lesson as a punk teenager or conducting what he describes as a John Bonham Séance in an attempt to conjure future success. While he stops short of mentioning his on-off need of therapy down the years, and pointedly ignores the very existence of Courtney Love, he writes brilliantly and candidly about the runaway train that was Nirvana, and watching Kurt Cobain fading away before his eyes on the set of the *Come As You Are* video. Most like Bruce Springsteen's autobiography in terms of its author's honesty, drive and self-deprecating humour, Grohl's inherent constancy and resilience comes across on every page.

Tom Doyle



Dave Grohl, front and centre on the runaway train of Nirvana.



The Fire brigade: incendiary jazz from (clockwise from top left) John Coltrane, Carla Bley, Ornette Coleman and Sun Ra.



of mostly white musicians, and the latter are featured as well. Twenty-five-year-old British blues woman Jo Ann Kelly sounds older than Beauregard, and John D. Loudermilk performs his song Tobacco Road – already a folk and rock standard. Other highlights include experimental acoustic guitarist John Fahey and rarely seen cult heroes Insect Trust, performing their eclectic sonic mix with future music historian Robert Palmer on clarinet.

Michael Simmons

Fire Music

★★★★★

Dir: Tom Surgal
SUBMARINE DELUXE. [ST](#)

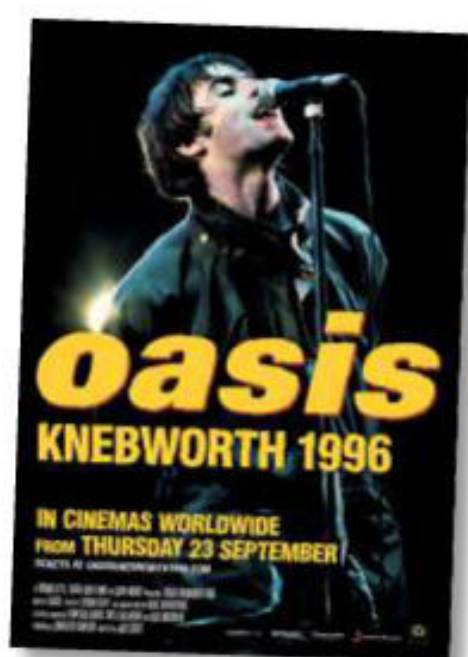
A thrilling portrait of the free jazz revolt; Thurston Moore, Nels Cline produce.

At 87 minutes, Fire Music isn't much longer than saxophonist John Coltrane's full-hour marathon through My Favorite Things in Tokyo, 1966. But Tom Surgal's virtuoso documentary on the radical, improvising music that shattered post-bop orthodoxy in the '60s – branded 'free jazz' after saxophonist Ornette Coleman's landmark 1961 album – is as propulsive and cathartic as the art itself. The prime movers – Coleman, pianist Cecil Taylor, saxophonist Albert Ayler – mark turning points via archival interviews and performances (Taylor whipping from ballad filigree to full-blown fury; Sun Ra's Arkestra in an auto-destruct frenzy like The Who at Monterey.) Collaborators and eyewitnesses (composer Carla Bley, the late drummer Rashied Ali) reflect on the struggle in the seeking. Surgal also takes a long, wide view, bringing in the ritual and activism of the Art Ensemble Of Chicago, European improvisers and New York's loft scene in the 1970s. Free jazz, pianist Burton Greene proclaims, was "like a short fuse with a long explosion." See and feel the burn.

David Fricke



Fire Music (4)



Oasis Knebworth 1996

★★★★★

Dir: Jake Scott
TRAFALGAR RELEASING. [C](#)

The Gallagher's peak moment documented as a landmark of mass unity.

A quarter-century behind us now, Oasis's two-night stand at "Knebbo" has rather paled in cultural memory, as a signifier of empty Cool Britannia expansionism. This wonderful movie, collated by Jake Scott (son of Ridley), definitively sets the record straight: these shows represented no-frills rock'n'roll at its best on a mass scale, before smartphones ruined everything. Oasis's audience back then – 250,000 in total, though they could've sold out 20 nights – is revealed as youthful, pleasingly mixed, not at all lumpenly blokey. As an expansive orchestral Masterplan glides past, one attendee heartbreakingly remembers her day as a carefree life's highlight with mates, one of whom vainly battled cancer just six months later. The Gallaghers, too, seem vulnerable, even effeminate, with Liam, as brother Noel aptly notes during an impassioned Slide Away, at his absolute peak vocally. The younger sibling offers no testimony until the very final scenes: "It was biblical," he summarises. Motion carried.

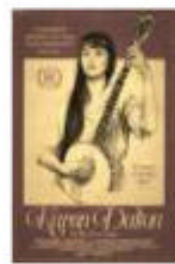
Andrew Perry

Karen Dalton: In My Own Time

★★★★★

Dir: Robert Yapkowitz & Richard Peete
GREENWICH ENTERTAINMENT. [ST](#)

Documentary on the influential folk-blues singer, named after her second LP.



Meandering at times, compelling at others, this is a noble attempt at explaining the life, works and myth of an artist whose time was short, works were few (two albums) and who wanted nothing to do with mythologising or anything else the music business had to offer – except music. The most mesmerising footage shows Dalton on-stage in a nightclub. How inside herself she looks when she sings, though oddly empty too, like there's an old gramophone in her chest playing an earthy-sounding record, and she just opens her mouth. Nick Cave says he cried the first time he heard her sing. Dalton's life definitely wasn't easy – married at 15; dead from Aids at 55. The directors tell it through her journals, read aloud by singer Angel Olsen, and interviews with Dalton's daughter, various exes, colleagues and thankfully few famous fans.

Sylvie Simmons



Now we need to start listening." This is a good place to begin. Based around startling to-camera testimony from actual victims, this is a simultaneously powerful and angering film that takes us deep into the abusive LA rock scene in the early 1970s and the "baby groupies" at Rodney Bingenheimer's English Disco. We hear graphic testimonies from Lori Mattix, The Runaways' Kari Krome, and Julia Holcomb (pictured above) who at 16 became the girlfriend and ward of Aerosmith's Steven Tyler. Real names of real pop stars are mentioned throughout, and yet still everyone concerned doubts any justice will ever come. Hopefully, that is not the case.

Andrew Male

Memphis '69

★★★★★

Dir: Joe LaMattina
FAT POSSUM. [DVD](#)

A bountiful time capsule of Delta blues and beyond.

A crew of roots-rooting hippies produced the three-day 1969 Memphis Country Blues Festival and ensured that Delta blues elders were captured on film. Bookended by Stax soul star Rufus Thomas (with The Bar-Kays) and blues-rocker Johnny Winter, country bluesmen included Bukka White, Mississippi Fred McDowell, Sleepy John Estes & Yank Rachell, Furry Lewis and 106-year-old Nathan Beauregard. At the time, the blues was being handed from the generation who'd been born into it to a younger one

The Beatles And India

★★★★★

Dir: Ajoy Bose & Peter Compton
CHERRY RED. [ST/DVD](#)

Doc inspired by Ajoy Bose's book Across the Universe: The Beatles in India.

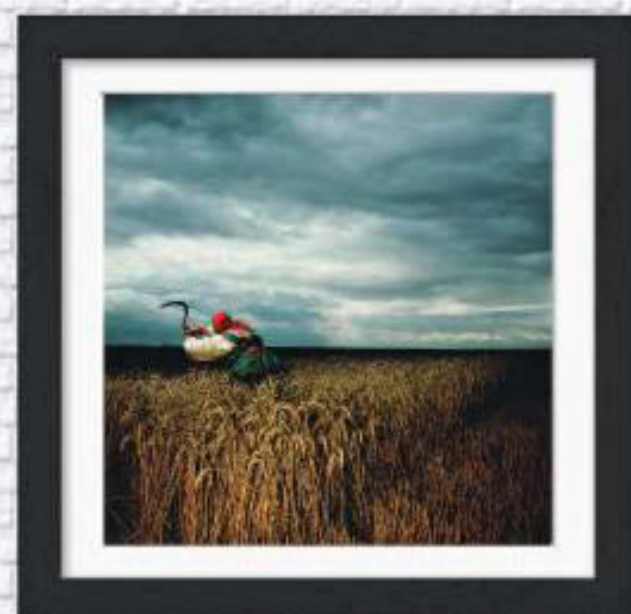
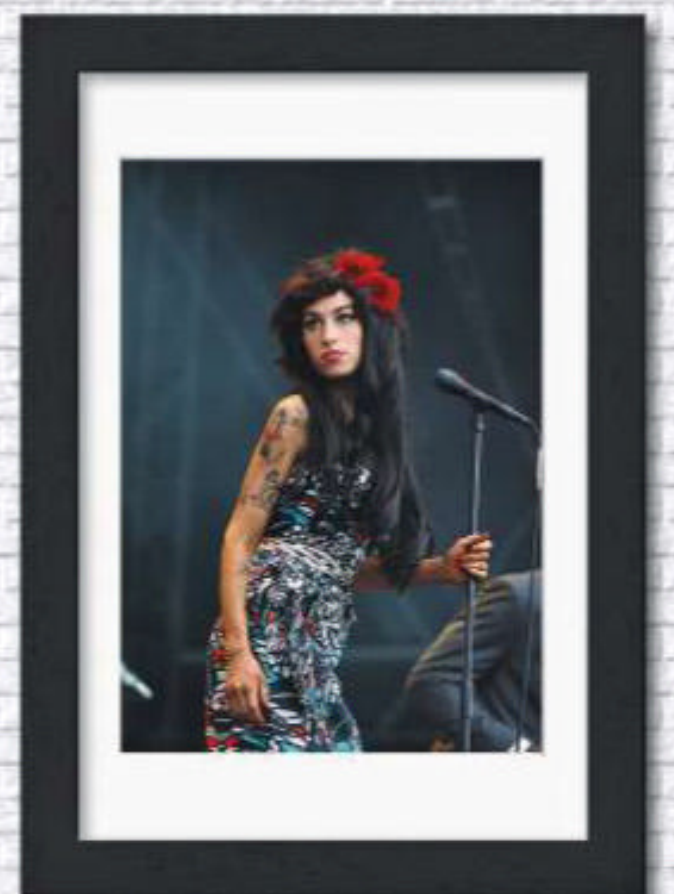
A year after Paul Saltzman's Meeting The Beatles In India comes another film on the band's musical/spiritual love affair with the country. This is The Beatles *and* India: not just what The Beatles took from India, but what the people of India took from them. Footage jumps from past to present, India to UK, US and back. Much is familiar, but there is some new material, plus interesting new interviews with Asian musicians. Some highlights: a great mop-topped, besuited, Indian Beatles covers band; and clips of George and Ravi Shankar clearly delighting in each other (it was highly unusual of Shankar, we learn, to give any student such attention). "People think we're just bodies, but we're actually spirits in bodies," is George's closing line. Though things would turn sour with the Maharishi, the effect on the band was momentous. A companion album features interpretations by Indian artists of 19 Beatles songs dating back to that 1968 trip.

Sylvie Simmons



Discover our unique collection of open and certified limited edition prints.

Whatever style of music you are into, we have you covered!



Over 700 artists and their most memorable gigs, album covers and iconic photography shot by the world's greatest music photographers.

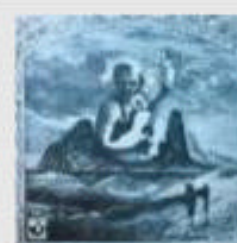
We print to order in various sizes and offer handcrafted wooden frames and mounting options.

PRICES FROM £25/\$35 (UNFRAMED) AND £70/\$95 (FRAMED) WITH FREE UK DELIVERY AND WORLDWIDE SHIPPING



Visit www.musicposter.co.uk/mojo

Songwriter and guitarist Michael Chapman, a lone adventurer.



THE LEGACY

The Album: *Fully Qualified Survivor* (EMI Harvest, 1970)

The Sound: The difficult second album turned into Chapman's masterwork as he tempered his more jagged inclinations with bruised, melancholic songs of enduring intrigue like *Postcards Of Scarborough* and *Kodak Ghosts*. A sprinkling of strings adds haunting beauty, with Mick Ronson, Rick Kemp and drummer Barry Morgan providing steel.

Fully Qualified Survivor

Unwavering guitar magus **Michael Chapman** left us on September 10.

MICHAEL CHAPMAN took no prisoners. An uncompromising Yorkshireman, he pursued his own individuality – both in music and personality – and felt more at home with farmers, miners and labourers than a music industry that never understood him and which he came to despise.

Riding high on the cusp of a breakthrough with 1970's *Fully Qualified Survivor*, he came back off tour to discover incomplete tracks were being released by his EMI Harvest label under the title *Window*. Chapman duly went on-stage at London's Queen Elizabeth Hall and told his audience not to buy it. The tone had been set.

Born on January 24, 1941, Chapman was entirely self-taught, describing himself as an accidental musician. "I figured it out myself. I don't play like anyone else because I can't." The son of a steel mill

worker from Leeds, he attributed his eclectic influences – ranging from Lightnin' Hopkins to John Coltrane, Hank Williams and Jimmie Rodgers – to American Forces Radio, which he'd listen to on visits to his deaf grandmother. He got his first guitar at 15, learned to play from Django Reinhardt records and started performing in skiffle groups, although his ambitions then lay in art.

On holiday in Cornwall one day he chanced upon a folk club and offered to play a few jazz tunes. This led to his first album, *Rainmaker*, produced by Gus Dudgeon, featuring autobiographical songs delivered in a raspy voice and a rugged mix of styles, yet saddled him with the 'folk' tag he detested.

"I'm a songwriter that plays a lot of guitar and I'm a guitar player that writes a lot of songs," he said.

He worked with Rick Kemp (pre-Steeleye Span) and Mick Ronson, claiming he introduced Ronson to David Bowie who then took him on as a Spider From Mars. Turning down the chance to tour with Elton John,

"I don't play like anyone else because I can't."

MICHAEL CHAPMAN

Chapman cemented his reputation as a lone adventurer with a series of powerful '70s albums: *Millstone Grit*, *Deal Gone Down*, *Life On The Ceiling* and *Savage Amusement*, recorded in Memphis with Don Nix. With a love of vintage guitars and a passion for developing sound, he released *Playing Guitar The Easy Way*, each track in a different tuning.

Illness, writer's block, scorn for the industry and heavy drinking ("I behaved disgracefully") resulted in long absences during the '80s and early '90s, but his career revived at the turn of the new century when Sonic Youth hailed him as a major influence. He even gigged with Thurston Moore, who told him: "your sound is what I always use when I do noise improvisation." Chapman's own improvisation reached a peak of feedback frenzy on his darkly intense 2012 album *The Resurrection And Revenge Of The Clayton Peacock*.

In later years he also explored Middle Eastern music and free-form avant-garde jazz, and returned to songwriting with 2017's accessible, full-band *50*, produced by young disciple Steve Gunn. "The first time I heard Michael Chapman's music, it felt like a new yet familiar friend," wrote Gunn in tribute. "I will miss him dearly."

Colin Irwin

Courtesy of Light In The Attic

Richard H. Kirk

Cabaret Voltaire
éminence grise

BORN 1956

"We were fucking arrogant," Richard H. Kirk told MOJO's Danny Eccleston last year of Cabaret Voltaire's early phase. "We knew what we were doing was special and our ideas were original." He sustained the stance with distinction for more than 40 years. The son of a Sheffield communist steel worker, ex-art student Kirk played guitar and treated clarinet in the group's harsh early incarnation (at their first gig in 1974 he wore a fairy light-festooned jacket plugged into the mains). Named for the Dada movement's club night in 1916 Zürich, and inspired by Eno, Velvets, Krautrock and dub, their Western Works studio – which legend says was sited next to a manufacturer of nuclear fallout shelters – was also an important part of their myth, a self-contained laboratory where albums including 1981's cornerstone *Red Mecca* were forged. Their proto-industrial electronics would encompass post-punk, funk, synthpop, electro, house and beyond, yet the whole was infused with a paranoid, questioning edge befitting an age of information overload, the deep state and manipulated realities. Though their highest chart placing was 1983's Number 31 album *The Crackdown*, producer/writer/programmer Kirk likened the band to The Velvet Underground, as modest sellers with a vast influence (a poster for 1984's *Micro-Phonies* can be seen on the hero's bedroom wall in John Hughes' film *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*). Kirk's other projects included Sweet Exorcist, whose Warp-released *Testone* is a Steel City techno classic, Sandoz and Electronic Eye. After the Cabs split in 1994, he retained a vigorous

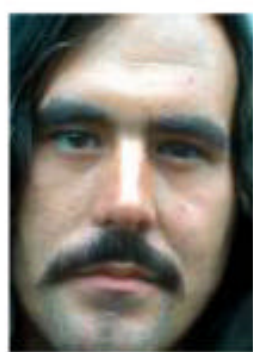
solo release schedule, but resurrected the Cabaret Voltaire name for the forbidding, dissident *Shadow Of Fear* in 2020. Suspicious of modern technology, he admitted to still using a mid-'80s Atari 1040ST computer and a sequencer of similar vintage. In tribute, his former Cabs partner Stephen Mallinder called him, "Stubborn, no sufferer of fools, but insightful, spontaneous, and with vision... and underneath the spiky shell a warm heart."

Ian Harrison

Commander Cody

Country-rock bandleader

BORN 1944



"We'd like to do for country music what [Paul] Butterfield did for blues," said the leader of Commander Cody And His Lost Planet

Airmen in 1970. Born George Frayne, his band released their debut *Lost In The Ozone* in '71, the first hippies to blend honky-tonk country, Western Swing and rockabilly, anchored by the animated Frayne's pumping boogie-woogie piano. He talked his way through their one major hit, 1972's *Hot Rod Lincoln*, and they became roots-rock kings. 1974's *Live From Deep In The Heart Of Texas* is a raucous classic, recorded at the Armadillo World Headquarters in the headneck capital of Austin. The original group broke up in 1976, but Frayne continued working as Commander Cody and as an esteemed artist and beloved character. Said LPA guitarist and Americana hero Bill Kirchen, "He had a heart as big as his bluster."

Michael Simmons



From doo-wop to disco, Labelle's Sarah Dash.

Sarah Dash

Labelle voice

BORN 1945

One third of the soul-funk-disco trio Labelle, Sarah Dash was the harmoniser in a group that boasted the big lead voices of Patti LaBelle and Nona Hendryx and was best known for its 1974 smash hit *Lady Marmalade*. Born in Trenton, New Jersey, Dash sang with Hendryx in church choirs and doo wop group The Del Capris who in 1961 linked with The Ordettes' Patricia Holt and Cindy Birdsong in Philadelphia to form The Blue Belles, Holt becoming Patti LaBelle. Their 1962 Number 15 US hit *I Sold My Heart To The Junkman* had actually been recorded by The Starlets but their own voices soon featured in the charts with '63 hit *Down The Aisle* (The Wedding Song). By the end of the '60s, and now co-managed by Ready Steady Go!'s Vicki Wickham, Birdsong had joined The Supremes and the trio would focus on a more contemporary sound, linking with Allen Toussaint in New Orleans in '74 for *Nightbirds* and its funk opus breakthrough hit. With space age

glam costumes, Labelle prospered until their '77 split. Thereafter, Dash had a disco hit with *Sinner Man*, made several solo LPs, sang with Keith Richards' X-Pensive Winos, reunited with Labelle for 2008's *Back To Now* LP, and joined Patti on-stage in Atlantic City two days before her death on September 20.

Geoff Brown

Victor Uwaifo

Highlife giant

BORN 1941

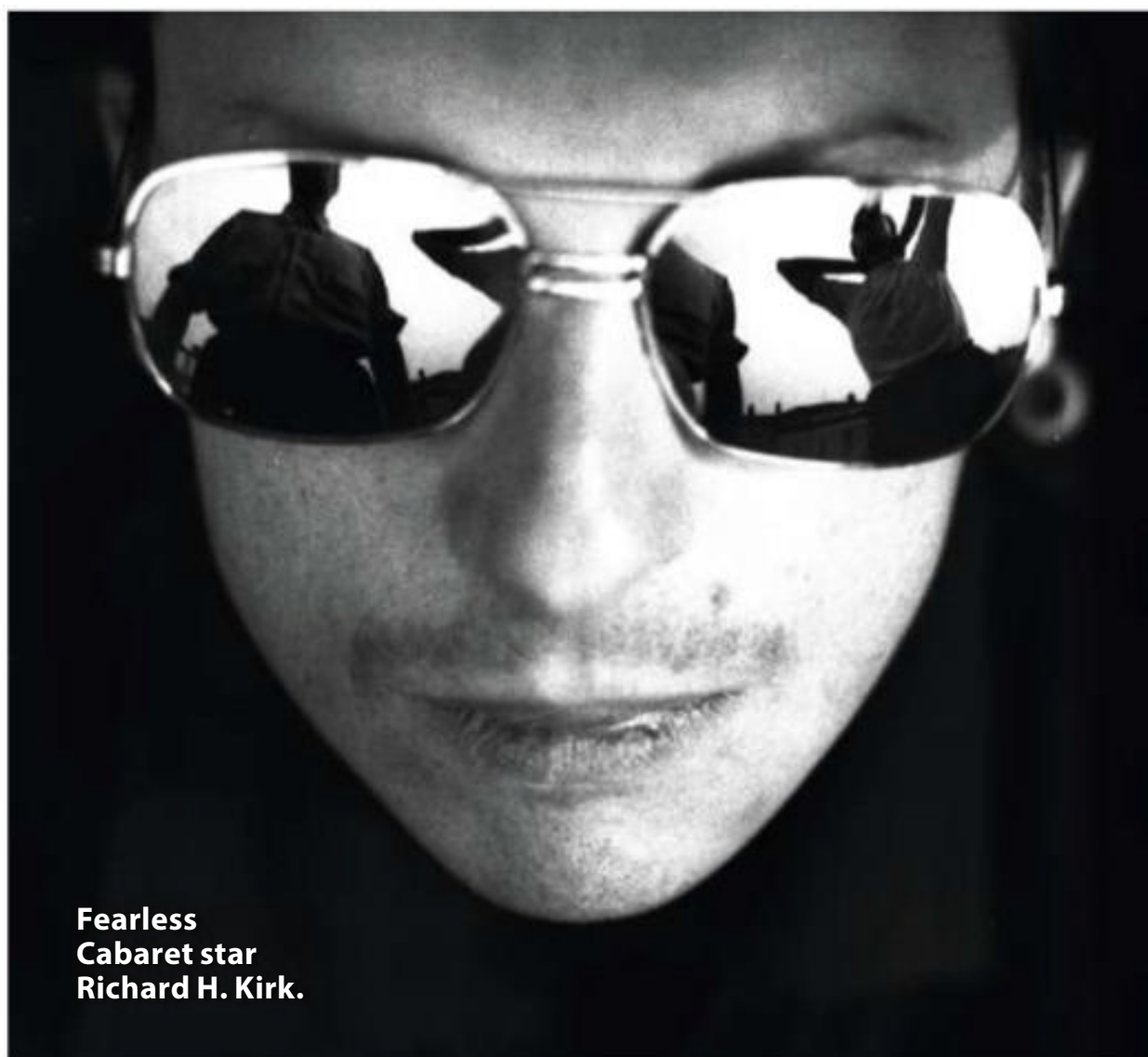


A true one-off, Sir Victor 'Guitar Boy Superstar' Uwaifo, a titan of Nigerian highlife music for more than 50 years, put his success down not the

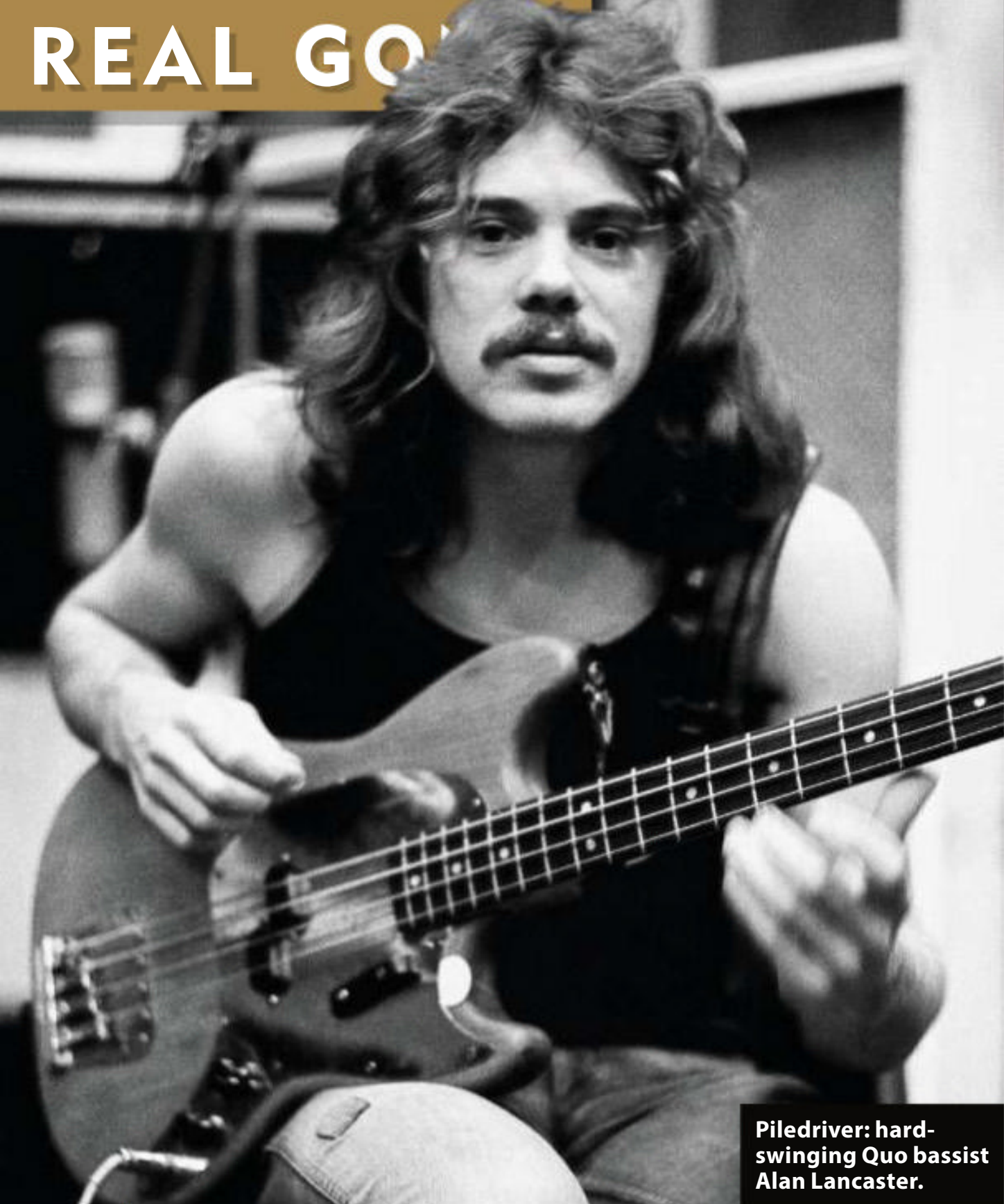
traditional selling of his soul to the devil but to a chance encounter with a mermaid in 1966: trying to replicate the sounds it made, he discovered a whole new way of playing. Added to his outrageous showmanship – not to mention an 18-string guitar, his own creation – it made the Benin City-born bandleader the first African to be awarded a gold disc (for his signature tune, *Joromi*) and the equal of Fela Kuti and King Sunny Adé in the mid-'70s. A non-smoking, teetotal, devout Christian, he also understood the behaviour expected of a celebrity: he modelled the home he built on a Boeing 727 and reputedly owned Africa's largest bedroom. He received a state funeral.

David Hutcheon

"Sir Victor Uwaifo put his success down to a chance encounter with a mermaid."



Fearless
Cabaret star
Richard H. Kirk.



Piledriver: hard-swinging Quo bassist Alan Lancaster.

Alan Lancaster

Status Quo's mighty bass
BORN 1949

Born in Peckham, in 1962 bass player Alan Lancaster met guitarist-singer Francis Rossi at Sedgehill Comprehensive in Lewisham. Their first band was The Scorpions; with the addition of drummer John Coghlan, guitarist Rick Parfitt and keyboard-player Roy Lynes, they later became The Spectres, whose 1966 debut 45 single Hurdy Gurdy Man Lancaster both wrote and sang. After a short period of being called Traffic Jam, in 1967 they changed their name again – forsaking alternative options The Muhammad Alis and The Queers – to The Status Quo. Beholden to phasing psychedelia, Rossi's Pictures Of Matchstick Men was a UK and US hit in 1968, but they had to wait for 1972's stripped-back, relentlessly blues-rocking album *Piledriver*, with Lancaster singing lead on a cover of The Doors' Roadhouse Blues, for their ultimate breakthrough. Thereafter, Status Quo's denimy, boogie'ing success was unstoppable, and Lancaster would swing hard on 16 Top 10 LPs (including four Number 1s) and 24 Top 20 singles, including Quo calling cards Rockin' All Over The World, Whatever You Want and, their sole Number 1, Down Down in 1974. Lancaster, nicknamed 'Nuff', continued to write and provide numerous lead vocals for the group, though discontentment arose for 1983's *Back To Back*, and when the group performed folk-tinged Number 3 hit Marguerita Time on Top Of The Pops, Slade's Jim Lea appeared in

an absent Lancaster's place. At 12pm on July 13, 1985 he went on-stage for a final appearance with Quo to open Live Aid. By now resident in Australia, in 1986 he reached an out-of-court settlement over the Rossi-Parfitt formation continuing to use the name without him. In Australia, Lancaster played in The Bombers with Coghlan and Aussie supergroup The Party Boys, among other bands, and in 2013 and 2014 rejoined Quo's original 'Frantic Four' for reunion dates in Britain and Europe. Lancaster had suffered from multiple sclerosis.

Ian Harrison

Joey Ambrose

Comets sax
BORN 1934



Joey Ambrose – born Joseph D'Ambrosio in Philadelphia – was a tenor sax player inspired by Lester Young, who joined Bill Haley's Comets

in 1954. "I was just out of school," he recalled. "Looking for a gig, that's all." His first session spawned the international million-seller Rock Around The Clock, and he can be seen in their debut Ed Sullivan live performance of the song.

“Joey Ambrose swapped music for a career as a casino pit boss in Vegas.”

Ambrose appeared on the classic 1954-55 Comets recordings, but quit with two other members at the end of that year to form The Jodimars, whose Well Now Dig This fills dancefloors at rocking clubs to this day. Moving to Las Vegas in 1964, he eventually swapped music for a career as a casino pit boss, but returned in 1987 alongside former bandmates as the Original Comets, touring and recording internationally until shortly before his death aged 87.

Max Décharné

and easy-going, Ellis would later perform or record with many names, from Ginger Baker and Marianne Faithfull to Ali Farka Touré, and recorded solo albums such as 1993's *Twelve And More Blues*, *A New Shift* (1996) and more. 2018's *In My Ellingtonian Mood* was a fittingly classy farewell.

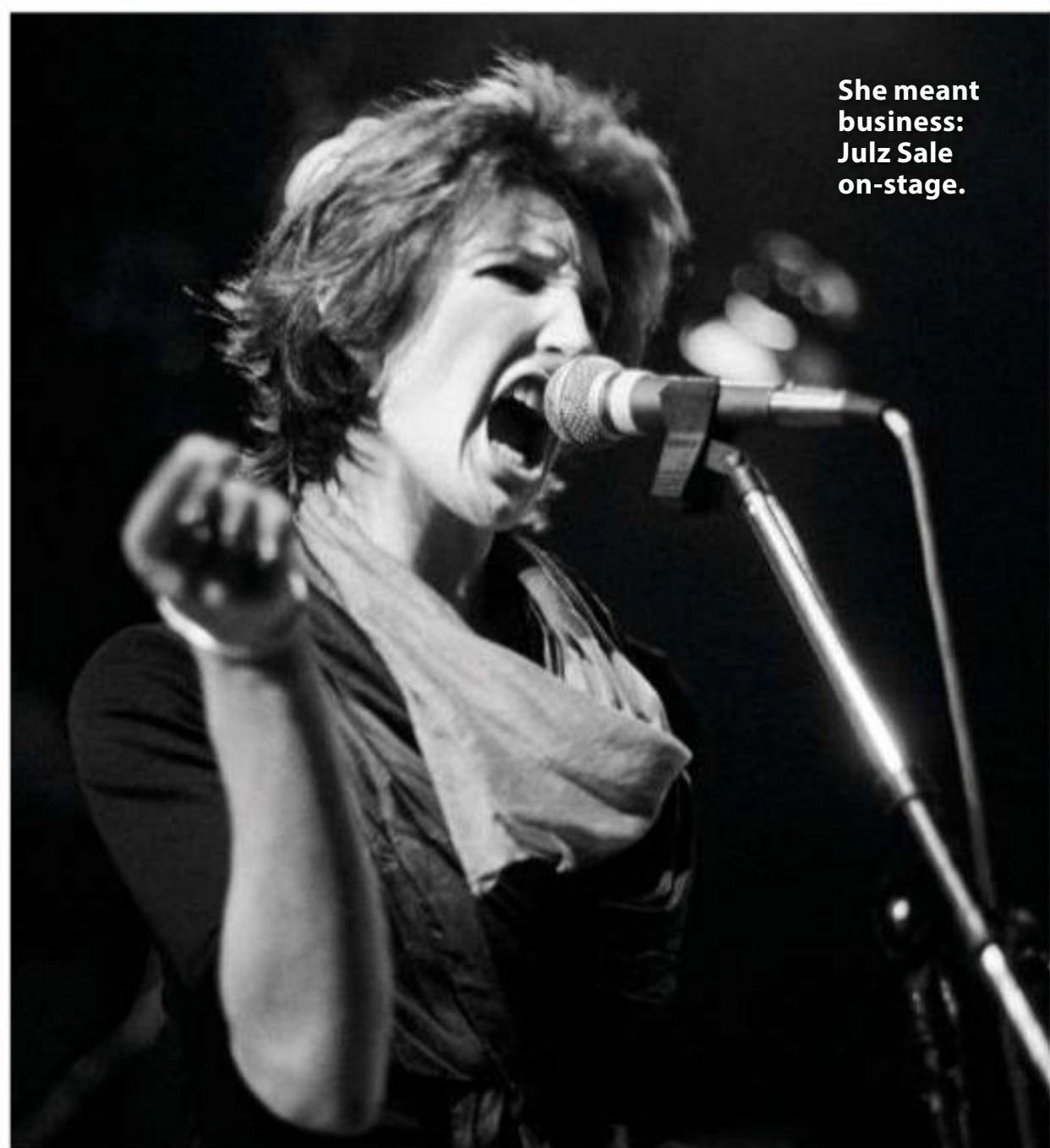
Geoff Brown

Julz Sale

Delta 5 voice/ guitar
BORN 1958

From Winson Green in Birmingham, Julz Sale co-founded Delta 5 in Leeds in 1979. Part of the same art school milieu that birthed The Mekons and Gang Of Four, the latter group let Sale's still-new, two-bass/three vocalist group have studio downtime to record their spiky punk-funk debut *Mind Your Own Business* (in May 2021, the song soundtracked an iPhone advert). Immediate Peel favourites, they toured at home and abroad and played Rock Against Racism and Rock Against Sexism benefits: Sounds' Phil Sutcliffe wrote admiringly of the "mild irritation, then gathering impatience, then fury" of Sales' performance. The group left the Rough Trade label for Charisma subsidiary Pre Records for overcooked LP *See The Whirl* in 1981, the same year Sale sang backing vocals on *Author! Author!* by labelmates Scars. She left Delta 5 that year. Later activities included serving as what her colleagues called the "heart of the distribution warehouse" for Rough Trade, sculpting in wood and teaching English in Thailand, where she married and was revered by her young pupils.

Ian Harrison



She meant business: Julz Sale on-stage.

Alamy (2), Getty (2)

Barry Ryan

Voice of Eloise

BORN 1948

Leeds-born Barry Ryan's mother was pop singer Marion Ryan, whose Love Me Forever was a UK Number 1 in 1958. In turn, Barry and his twin brother Paul, both ex-trainee hairdressers, would form a teenage duo and score five Top 30 hits between 1965 and 1967. When Paul bowed out due to stage fright, he continued to write songs for his brother, and in 1968 they struck gold with the towering, baroque Eloise, a Europe-wide chart topper and UK Number 2 in October 1968 (the song was a favourite of Freddie Mercury and would be successfully covered by The Damned in 1986). Barry's self-penned Love Is Love would also be a huge seller in Germany, but in 1977 he largely withdrew from music and became a fashion photographer, though the pre-internet age furnished rumours of hideous facial burns after a 1968 publicity stunt

involved an exploding "hot-line" telephone and photos of Ryan wrapped in bandages. He returned to singing in the '90s, still in demand across Europe for his biggest and most memorable hit. His friend Yusuf/Cat Stevens remembered his "good old buddy... we'll miss him."

Ian Harrison

George Wein

Jazz festival visionary

BORN 1925



Born in Massachusetts to music-loving parents, George Wein studied piano and served in the army before opening his Storyville label and

nightspot in Boston, promoting and recording John Coltrane, Charles Mingus and others, in 1950. In 1954 he presented Billie Holiday, Ella Fitzgerald and many more at the first Newport Jazz Festival in Rhode Island, laying the groundwork for the modern outdoor rock



Barry Ryan: brother, hitmaker and "good old buddy".

festival (he recalled donating his first producer's fee to keep the event solvent). In 1959 he staged the storied Newport Folk Festival, scene of Bob Dylan going electric in 1965, and would go on to found similar jazz celebrations across the world, notably the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival. He was awarded France's Légion

d'Honneur, was decorated by Presidents Carter and Clinton, and as a pianist recorded albums with the Newport All Stars and many others. He played his final gig – billed as One More Once – at the Newport Jazz Festival in 2019, aged 93, a living thread between eras.

Clive Prior

THEY ALSO SERVED

BASSIST **ROGER NEWELL** (b.c.1948) was a founder member of **Rick Wakeman's English Rock Ensemble** and played on Wakeman albums and tours including 1974's

Journey To The Centre Of The Earth and '75's *The Myths And Legends Of King Arthur And The Knights Of The Round Table*, on which he played a triple-necked instrument. He also played with **Marty Wilde's Wildcats** for 30 years, worked as a journalist, and, in 2016, reunited with his late '60s psychedelic group **Rainbow Ffolly**.

SOUSAPHONE PLAYER **BENNIE PETE** (above, b.1976) co-founded New Orleans' iconic **Hot 8 Brass Band** aged 18. An advocate for the city's brass tradition from a young age, he learnt tuba at school, playing in bands whose members combined to form the Hot 8. Keen to uphold and update their marching band heritage, Pete's sousaphone bass line led the group through diverse covers such as The Specials' Ghost Town and Joy Division's Love Will Tear Us Apart.

MAGNETIC FIELDS voice **SUSAN ANWAY** (b.1951) lent her lovely, glassy vocals to the group's 1991 debut, *The Wayward Bus* and the

following year's *Distant Plastic Trees*. Anyway met Magnetic Fields' writer **Stephen Merritt** in Boston when she was singing with local heroes **V.** Latterly she contributed

ethereal vocals to the gothic electro outfit, **Diskarnate**, whose German-released LP *Greed* came out in 2013.

MBAQANGA singer **NOBESUTHU**

MBADU (b.1945) grew up singing in school and church choirs in her native Durban, South Africa. She joined **The Mahotella Queens** in 1964, who quickly found huge domestic success. The original group split in 1971, but Mbadu rejoined the band reformed as **Mahlathini And The Mahotella Queens** in 1987 to record and tour internationally, continuing after the 1999 death of singer Mahlathini.

BASSIST **BOB MOORE** (below, on left, b.1932) was a member of Nashville's **A-Team** sessioners. Among his credits were **Elvis's** sessions from 1958 to 1962, arranging **Roy Orbison's** early classics for Monument, **Dylan's Self Portrait**, **Patsy Cline's** Crazy, **Roger Miller's** King Of The Road, **Tammy Wynette's**

Stand By Your Man and many more. His son is the DIY powerpopper **R. Stevie Moore**.

HILLBILLY LEGEND **DON MADDOX** (b.1922) sang and played fiddle in sibling band **The Maddox Brothers And Rose**. Moving from Alabama, they formed in California in 1937. Called 'The World's Most Colourful Hillbilly Band', they toured the US and recorded until 1956. The last living member, Maddox worked as a rancher and played into his nineties.

DRUMMER **COLIN BAILEY** (b.1934) was born in Swindon. After touring with **Winifred Atwell** in Britain he joined the **Australian Jazz Quartet**; while touring the US, he met pianist **Vince Guaraldi**, joining his group for 1964's *Jazz Impressions Of A Boy Named Charlie Brown* and 1966's *It's The Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown*. Bailey also worked with **Benny Goodman, Sinatra, Chet Baker** and others, and played in the house band on The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson.

SINGER **MARIA MENDIOLA** (b.1952) formed Spanish singing duo **Baccara** with fellow flamenco dancer **Mayte Mateos** in 1976. Their debut Eurodisco smash Yes Sir, I Can Boogie hit Number 1

across Europe in 1977, with Sorry I'm A Lady a UK Top 10 the following year. The group split in 1981, with both members forming rival Baccara formations: Mendiola's **New Baccara** found success in Europe in the hi-NRG genre. She declared herself happy with her signature tune's embracing by fans of the Scottish football team.

GOTHIC rocker **OLLI WISDOM** (b.1958) first played in '77 punks **The Unwanted**. From 1981 he fronted Bristol group **Specimen** and co-founded the Batcave club night, which inspires 'death rock' acts to this day. After Specimen split in 1986, Wisdom recorded psy-trance as **Space Tribe**, and returned for Specimen's Youth-produced 2013 reformation LP *Wake The Dead*.

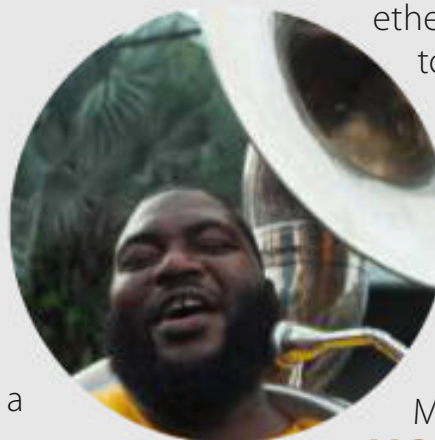
'THE ETHIOPIAN ELVIS', **ALÈMAYÈHU ESHÈTÉ** (right, b.1941) performed with Addis Ababa's police band before going solo. Singing in Amharic, he mixed local forms with US soul – he was also compared to James Brown – with 1961's debut hit Seul beginning a prolific recording career that was interrupted by the communist Derg regime in 1974. Introduced to a wider

audience by the *Ethiopian* compilation series in the noughties, he performed internationally thereafter.

ARRANGER AND VOCALIST **BARBARA MOORE** (b.1932) was a familiar voice in the '60s and '70s: she vocalised the theme to The Saint, duetted with **Peter Cook** on the Bedazzled soundtrack, and as a member of **The Ladybirds** and her own **Barbara Moore Singers**, sang with **Sandie Shaw, Elton John, Hendrix** and **Dusty Springfield**. She also recorded library music and arranged the **Brass Incorporated's** version of At The Sign Of The Swingin' Cymbal, AKA the theme to Radio 2's Pick Of The Pops.

BELGIAN photographer **STEFAN DE BATSELIER** (b.1963) became a striking presence in the UK music press in the 1990s, his

high-contrast, candid and revealing pictures gracing the pages of NME for many years. De Batselier worked swiftly to capture the essence of his subjects, then amplified that essence in dramatic, gorgeous prints; an infallibly mellow, patient and companionable man, with or without a camera. *Jenny Bulley, Celina Lloyd, John Mulvey and Ian Harrison*





No more Rufus'ing and a-fighting (clockwise from main): Chaka Khan revels in her success; with harmonica man Stevie Wonder; producer Arif Mardin and (right) rapper Melle Mel; on Saturday Night Live; single sleeve.



NOVEMBER 1984 ...Chaka Khan says, I Feel For You

NOVEMBER 24 Chaka Khan had already had a big hit this year. In April the Grammy-winning Ain't Nobody, credited to Rufus & Chaka Khan, had reached UK Number 8. But Rufus, the Chicago funk outfit she'd first sung with in 1972, were no more. Now a solo artist, on this November 1984 day she was enjoying her third week as Britain's Number 1 with *I Feel For You*, taking the US Number 3 slot at the same time.

"Chaka is definitely one of the most important singers in American pop music history," her masterful producer Arif Mardin later told writer Bill DeMain. "She has total mastery over her craft and her music... *I Feel For You*, I look at that as one of the songs I'd like to take with me to a desert island."

Raised in a bohemian enclave on the Windy City's South Side, the singer born Yvette Marie Stevens was a vocalist of such expressive force that she could count Aretha Franklin among her admirers. Yet her career so far had been inconsistent and not always remunerative: as soul writer David Nathan recalled, her verdict in 1984 was,

"I've been to hell and back – in a limousine."

Consequently, Mardin wasn't aiming to miss when he oversaw the album that became *I Feel For You*. Working over a six-month period in 16 studios in New York and Los Angeles, he and Chaka were assisted by the likes of Russ Titelman, David Frank, Average White Band and Toto personnel, and other top sessioneers. A polished mix of R&B and electro, the most arresting song was the title cut, a Prince cover featuring a harmonica solo from Stevie Wonder (plus samples from Wonder's 1963 recording *Fingertips*) and an

introductory rap from Melle Mel of the Furious Five, fresh in every sense from the summer's hip-hop movie *Beat Street* and UK Number 7 hit *White Lines (Don't Do It)*.

Chaka wasn't the only artist to cover the song, which debuted on Prince's second album in 1979. The Pointer Sisters gave it a slow Southern soul treatment on their 1982 set *So Excited!*, while Gary, Indiana's Rebbie Jackson followed Prince's arrangement more faithfully on her almost-simultaneous long-player *Centipede*. By contrast, Mardin's all-out, high-gloss production both captured the hip hop zeitgeist and ensured wider crossover. The stutter effect on Melle Mel's rap, Mardin told NPR's *All Things Considered* in 2005, was actually a studio accident: "We said, Let's keep that. That's very interesting." He added that his brief to the rapper was to avoid braggadocio and concentrate instead on love.

For his part, Melle Mel did not meet Chaka, and recalled first hearing the song – hailed as the first time hip-hop and R&B collided – on the radio in a cab in New York. "I was high as hell," he said. "I thought I was dreaming!"

The hip hop flavour continued in the video. An original sleazy-but-goofy clip featured Chaka leading a revolt of female exotic dancers who then invaded a male strip joint. Things were toned down for a second promo featuring the singer spliced with

**"I can sing that
stuff in my sleep."**

CHAKA KHAN

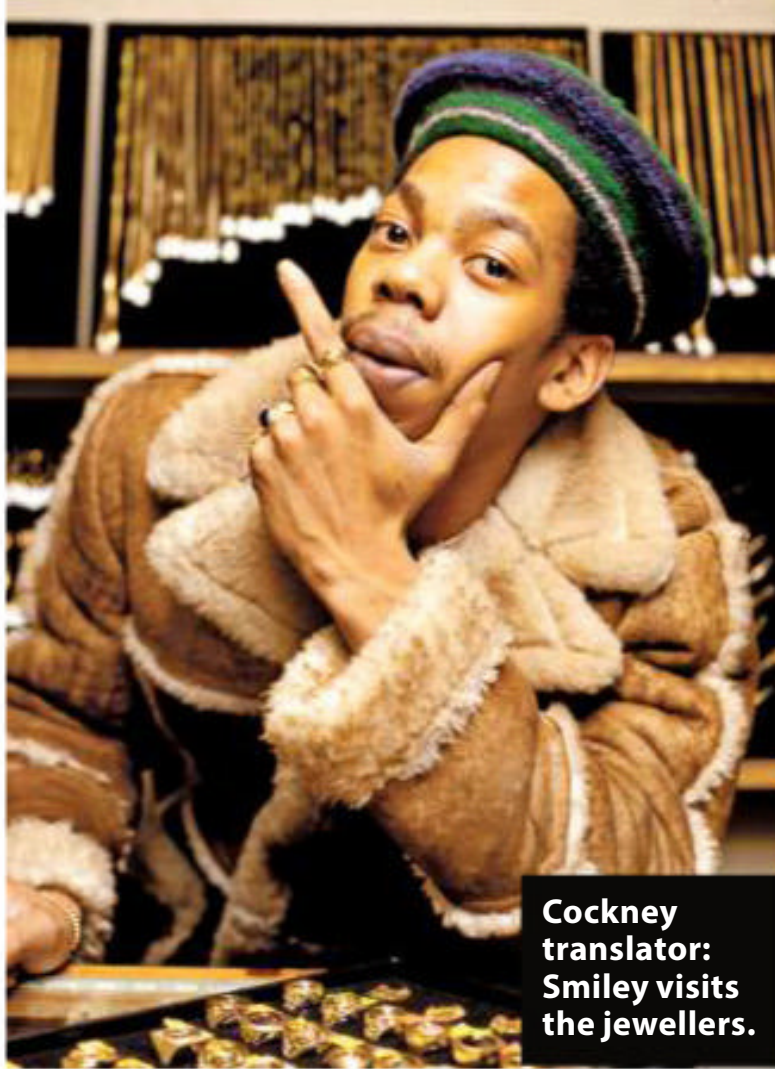
scenes of DJ Chris 'The Glove' Taylor and bodypoppers including Shabba Doo, Boogaloo Shrimp, Pop N'Taco and Lollipop (all of whom had appeared in spring's rap musical Breakin') taken from a graffiti-sprayed fashion show filmed for designer Norma Kamali's Street Beat range.

The month's other engagements included November 3's Saturday Night Live performance, playing I Feel For You and selected Rufus hits at US dates and masses of promotion. The singer seemed bemused at the song's success, however.

"For five years I have been going into the studio, really working on creating *masterpieces*, mixing jazz and rock and funk," she said in November 21's Smash Hits. "So now I do this song and put rapping on it to boot, which is really the pits... and look at it! It's amazing!"

The album would go platinum in the US and chart across Europe, where she toured in 1985. A 10-time Grammy winner who still gigs and records, she would go on to collaborate with the likes of Ray Charles, Miles Davis, Barry White and Herbie Hancock. After Prince produced her 1998 LP *Come 2 My House*, she sang I Feel For You live with him on tour, while both Prince and Stevie Wonder were on hand for an explosive rendition celebrating her Lifetime Achievement gong at the BET Awards in Los Angeles in 2006. Yet, having told The Face, "I can sing that kind of stuff in my sleep," she admitted to being bored with her biggest single in an interview with The Guardian in 2015. But she still acknowledged, "I guess I'll be singing it for the rest of my life."

Ian Harrison



Cockney translator: Smiley visits the jewellers.

Smiley Culture beats the rap

NOVEMBER 24 Police Officer, the second single by south London fast-chatting MC Smiley Culture, breaks out of the reggae listings and enters the pop chart at Number 92. A witty and comic account of a police traffic stop, undiscovered ganja and quick thinking delivered in accents both London and Caribbean, the song cloaks serious commentary on institutional racism and will climb to Number 12 in January. The MC, born David Emmanuel, has two more minor hits (Cockney Translation and Schooltime Chronicle), appears in a NatWest bank ad and has a cameo in the 1986 film *Absolute Beginners*. A British MC pioneer, he will tragically die from a stab wound, ruled as suicide, during a police raid on his Surrey home in 2011.



Chairman of the Broad: Macca and Linda (in blue) with cinematic ballroom dancers.

MACCA SENDS REGARDS

NOVEMBER 28 At Liverpool's Odeon cinema, Paul McCartney attends the UK premiere of his opinion-dividing, whimsical musical *Give My Regards To Broad Street*, which also stars his wife Linda, Ringo Starr, Sir Ralph Richardson, John Paul Jones and wrestler Giant Haystacks, among others. Paul's OST for the film and his Rupert Bear-themed single *We All Stand*

Together are both out now. On November 16, Paul is filmed with Julian Lennon on NBC's *Friday Night Videos* show. The latter's 45 *Too Late For Goodbyes* is currently at UK Number 6, while his debut LP *Valotte* peaked at Number 20 the previous week. Regarding competing with Macca in the charts, Julian tells The Tube's Paula Yates, "I'm not bothered... it's quite funny."

ALSO ON!



PIL HIT NY

2 **Public Image Limited** play New York's Beacon Theatre. Sex Pistols songs *Bodies* and *Anarchy In The UK* are in the setlist. Support act **Afrika Bambaataa** spins *World Destruction*, the song he and **John Lydon** (above) will soon release as *Time Zone*, in his DJ set.

WELCOME, FGTH!

10 *Welcome To The Pleasure-dome* by **Frankie Goes To Hollywood** enters the UK LP chart at Number 1. "We're at the top and we aim to stay there," bassist **Mark O'Toole** tells *My Guy*. The group are currently touring the US.

SMITHS IN EIRE

11 The Smiths begin a nine-date Irish tour at the Waterford Savoy. The next day they issue a BBC session/B-side compilation *Hatful Of Hollow*. In November 3's *Melody Maker*, Morrissey talks about Pete Burns ("quite stunning"), Billy Mackenzie ("indescribable") and Lloyd Cole ("lovely").

PIRATES AHOY!

16 CBS, EMI, Chrysalis and other label giants join a legal bid to outlaw the sale of high-speed tape-to-tape hi-fi's, citing bootlegging. The BPI also want parliament to outlaw the rental of CDs.

'BYE, JULES

17 **Jules Bihari** dies aged 72 in Los Angeles. In 1945 he founded influential R&B label *Modern Records* with his brothers. Acts included **B.B. King**, **Ike Turner**, **Etta James** and more.

TOP TEN

ITALY SINGLES OCTOBER 12

1 **STEVIE WONDER** I JUST CALLED TO SAY I LOVE YOU MOTOWN

2 **BRONSKI BEAT** SMALLTOWN BOY LONDON

3 **CULTURE CLUB** THE WAR SONG VIRGIN

4 **JULIO IGLESIAS & DIANA ROSS** ALL OF YOU CBS

5 **ALPHAVILLE** FOREVER YOUNG WEA

6 **ANTONELLO VENDITTI** CI VORREBBE UN AMICO ACCORDI

7 **GEORGE MICHAEL** CARELESS WHISPER EPIC

8 **DURAN DURAN** THE WILD BOYS PARLOPHONE

9 **SANDY MARTON** PEOPLE FROM IBIZA IBIZA

10 **THE CREATURES** MAYBE ONE DAY FULL TIME

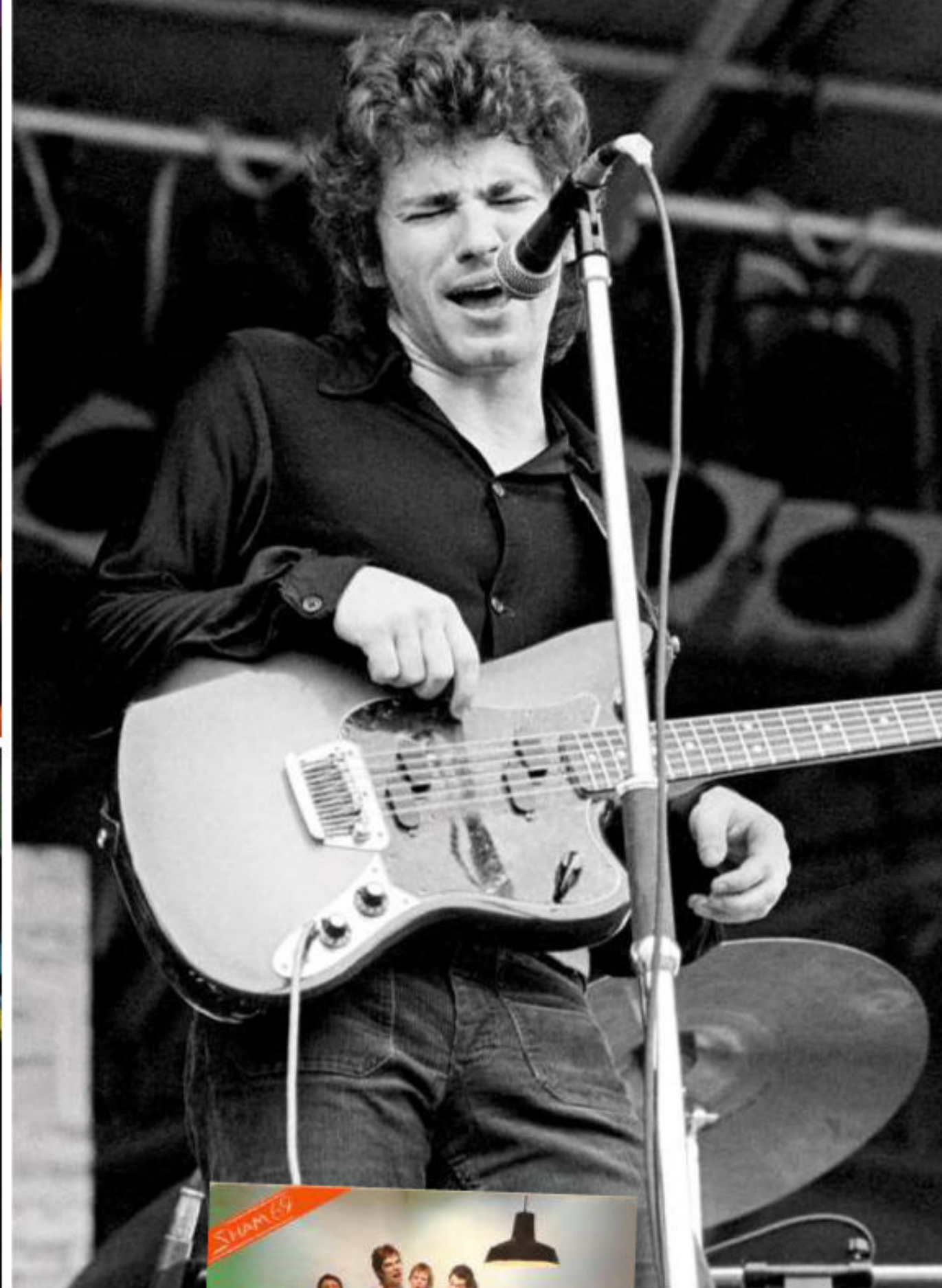


You what? Julio and Diana, at Number 4.

AD ARCHIVE 1984



We know them for Formula 1 and their tyres, but who was aware Pirelli also made lunar quality slippers for all the family? Not us!



Time to sort out those nagging rock **questions, enigmas** and **brain-teasers**, then raise more.

Simon Tilney, via e-mail

MOJO says: That's a tough one. There are lots of mythical albums that were never realised – Love's *Gethsemane*, or the abandoned 1985 Scott Walker LP produced by Brian Eno with guitar by Robert Fripp, for example – some of which have been imaginatively constructed by fans, such as the various attempts at fabricating the apocryphal Beatles LP *Hot As Sun*. For music that is known to have been recorded but has never been heard, we suggest the second LP by Debbie Harry's pre-Blondie folk poppers The Wind In The Willows (the tapes were apparently lost), the Judas Priest session produced by Stock, Aitken and Waterman in 1988 (they suspected the fans might not be quite ready, though a snippet of their cover of The Stylistics' *You Are Everything* is online), Beyoncé's Afrobeat recordings, the 1983 Simon & Garfunkel LP *Think Too Much* (Paul wiped Art's voice from songs later heard on *Hearts And Bones*), and the results of a 1985 Def Leppard/Jim Steinman collaboration (Joe Elliott says this will definitely be staying in a vault marked 'do not open'). Also so-far unreleased are The Beatles' legendary 1967 piece *Carnival Of Light*, Jeff Beck's 1970 album recorded at Motown, and Frank Zappa's valedictory *Varèse: The Rage And*



The Fury, though we live in hope. Until then, we'll have to make do with imagining what the likes of a completed *Human Highway* by CSNY or the lost John Fahey/Red Krayola studio sessions, sound like. As for deliberately destroyed masters, thanks to Rob Kirby for telling us that parts of Jean Michel Jarre's ostensibly erased *Music For Supermarkets* have actually turned up on subsequent releases, and to Mark Swift, who shared the woeful tale of Prince deleting his song Wally in 1986.

Since the late '60s, Tim Buckley has been my favourite singer. I had one chance to see him: Knebworth Festival in 1974. We arrived late, and as the lunatics had put him first on the bill, we missed him. Was there a film of the event, or even an album?

Mike Jones, Oswestry



MOJO says: There's some silent Super 8 film of Buckley at Knebworth in existence, and an audience tape was released as the bootleg *Return Of The Starsailor*. Including vocal warm-ups, band introductions and a cheery, "How you doin' campers?," it's a bit rough, but he's on good form – someone needs to sync n and audio, surely?

He's been doing it for years but even now I get a kick from Richard Osman from Pointless being the brother of Mat Osman from Suede. Who are the other rock relatives of note?

Simon Dodds, via e-mail

MOJO says: Staying with the game show theme, Ed Sheeran's second cousin is TV presenter Gordon

Rock, banned (anti-clockwise from top left): Judas Priest rev it up; Stock, Aitken and Waterman push the faders; rock relative Linda Lusardi and friend; Sham 69's *Tell Us The Truth*; early starter Tim Buckley.



Burns of The Krypton Factor fame. Also, Richard is the Welsh Minister for Games, DJ Judge Jules' uncle-in-law, and, infamously, Piers Morgan's cousin. Piers Shapps is cousin to The Prodigy's Keith Flint. And don't forget Pistols/On-U/Blondie engineer Mark Lusardi, whose daughter is a model, and TV presenter Linda Hamilton. Finally, was a contestant on an episode of The Pointless Celebrities in 2020 and was co-hosted by Richard Osman.

Re: MOJO 334's plea for more information on where the debut Sham 69 album was recorded. According to bassist Dave Tregunna, the live side of *Tell Us The Truth* was recorded at the Vortex in London. Dave revealed this on a recent episode of Foxy Radio, presented by the excellent Peter Fox.

Mike Richmond, York

She was Doug Dillard's girlfriend and sang on the Dillard & Clark Expedition albums as well as with Mad Dogs and Englishmen. So what happened to Donna Washburn? Love her voice!

Peter Snel, The Netherlands

MOJO says: She also sang with John Mayall and with Leonard Cohen, getting a credit on 1973's *Live Songs*. But who out there can solve this mystery?

Have you got a challenging musical question for the MOJO Brains Trust? E-mail askmojo@bauermedia.co.uk and we'll help untangle your trickiest puzzles.



New Adventures in iFi

Win! A fine GO blu headphone amplifier.

THIS MONTH, multi-award-winning British audio brand iFi is giving MOJO readers a chance to win its brilliant new pocket-size headphone amplifier, the GO blu. The size of a Zippo lighter and weighing less than an AA battery, the GO blu is the ultimate go-anywhere headphone upgrade. It connects to your smartphone, tablet or laptop via High-Definition Bluetooth, supporting all the latest Bluetooth audio formats to ensure that whichever phone you use you get the best possible performance. With balanced

amp circuitry delivering captivating power and purity, just combine the GO blu with your favourite corded headphones or in-ear monitors and revel in a glorious cathedral of sound!

Worth £199 each, we have four up for grabs. Get on the good foot and fill in gridmaster Michael Jones' crossword and send a scan of it to mojo@bauermedia.co.uk, making sure to type CROSSWORD 337 in the subject line. Entries without that subject line will not be considered. Please include your home address, e-mail and phone number. The closing date for entries is **December 2**. For the rules of the quiz, see www.mojo4music.com

For more info go to www.ifi-audio.com



ANSWERS

MOJO 334

Across: 1 Clive Langer, 8 Lionel 11 Oxide, 12 Pure, 13 Ronan O'Rahilly, 14 Rowetta, 18 Ibex, 20 Mento, 25 Azure, 28 Rat, 29 Dominion, 31 Osibisa, 32 As, 33 Out, 35 Moe Asch, 36 Fon, 37 Eagles, 41 Hall Of The Mountain, 42 CSA, 43 Crab, 45 Plug, 47 Sub, 49 Eden, 50 Why, 51 Prisoners, 53 Hives, 54 Stan Webb, 56 Lief, 59 Mai Tai, 62 Overend Watts

Down: 1 Charlie Tumahai, 2 Iron, 3 Exene, 4 Alarum, 5 Goth, 7 Rialto, 8 Levy, 9 Neu, 10 Liege, 12 Pere Ubu, 15 Woes, 16 Tar, 17 Ants, 19 Eddie Floyd, 21 Epic, 22 Tangram, 23 Nas, 24 Disc, 26 Zion, 27 Rite, 30 Mastodon, 34 Black Beer, 36 Frumpy, 38 Aunts, 39 Scabies, 40 Cherry Laine, 44 Backward, 46 Grill 48 EMI, 49 Electro, 51 PSB, 52 Odelay, 54 Sice, 55 Bela, 58 Cut

Winner: David Battye of Holmfirth, wins a fabulous Cyrus Audio ONE Cast amplifier.

ACROSS

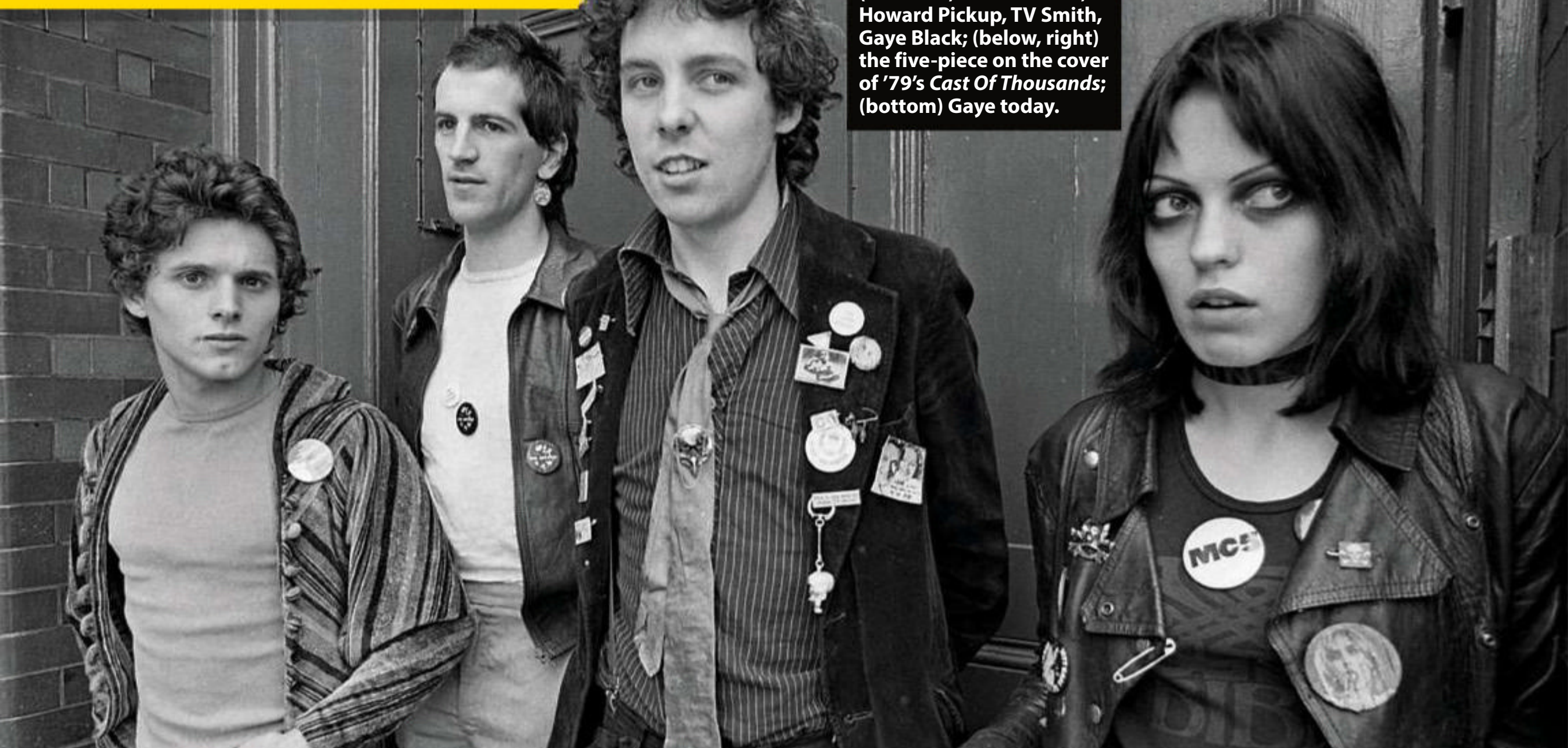
- 2 *Love Will Be Reborn*, her latest LP (6,10)
- 10 The ----- Time, Duffy & Duffy & co (5)
- 11 Album whose cover shows Thomas Jerome Newton in a spaceship (7,2,7)
- 12 He recoiled from being part of Depeche Mode (4,6)
- 16 Rebekah, whose Spanish version of Crying features in Mulholland Drive (3,3)
- 19 The start of Television's *Adventure* (5)
- 20 "I'd be safe and warm if I was in LA" (The Mamas & The Papas) (10,7)
- 22 He was born Derek Dick (4)
- 23 Fela Kuti's impasse (9)
- 25 Spirit singer, on Thunder Island (3,8)
- 28 She appears on Tusk (4)
- 29 Waiting In -----, Bob Marley track (4)
- 30 They had *Good News For People Who Love Bad News* (6,5)
- 32 *Rave* ----- (Mogwai album) (5)
- 34 Clare, whose voice is heard during The Great Gig In The Sky (5)
- 35 Summer's Stuff or Como's Diggity (3)
- 36 Jazz pianist Powell (3)
- 38 Major British record label that was bought out by UMG (1.1.1.)
- 39 Her final LP was *Camera Obscura* (4)
- 41 Release by Iggy Pop (4)
- 42 *The Isle Of* -----, live unplugged album by The Pretenders (4)
- 44 Is it Goswell, Unthank or Stevens? (6)
- 46 Satisfactory effort making This Too Shall Pass (1.1.2)
- 47 4AD band fronted by Miki Berenyi (4)
- 49 See photoclude A (5,7)
- 50 The -----, typical girls like Tessa, Viv and Ari (5)
- 52 A little number by Metallica (3)
- 53 They sang Black Betty in 1977 (3,3)
- 56 He was Stronger upon Graduation (5,4)
- 59 Musical biopic in which Mr Foxx plays Mr Charles (3)
- 60 Macca's discarnate song for Peter And Gordon (6)
- 61 Shirley Collins' acclaimed comeback album from 2016 (8)
- 62 They go to war for Ben Folds Five (4)

DOWN

- 1 Radiohead producer Godrich (5)
- 2 It's the Classical Gas man (5,8)
- 3 Claudia Brücken's post-Propaganda collaboration with Thomas Leer (3)
- 4 Compilation collecting both Joy Division and New Order tracks (5)
- 5 Richard Ashcroft is like this with everybody (5)
- 6 Contemplative 1950s doo-wop track by Dion And The Belmonts (1,6,3)
- 7 Andrew W.K. gets it! (3)
- 8 The Strokes' debut long-player (2,4,2)
- 9 Bruce Springsteen album on which he had a Brilliant Disguise (6,2,4)
- 12 Neil Young & Crazy Horse's noise experiment that was joined to Weld (3)
- 13 Long-lived metal band founded by bassist Steve Harris (4,6)
- 14 A sign you shouldn't bother with the last Van der Graaf Generator album (2,3,7)
- 15 "I can see the moon and it seems so clear" (Nick Drake) (4)
- 17 Warm material from The Normal (11)
- 18 Steve Ignorant's insensitive punks (5)
- 21 Music's long-distance walker? (3,9)
- 24 Bob Mould's *Copper Blue* band (5)
- 25 See photoclude B (3,6)
- 26 Possibly Kate, possibly Graham (4)
- 27 See photoclude C (5,4)
- 31 ----- Speaking, Chili Peppers hit (11)
- 32 One of Julian Cope's three attempts (3)
- 33 Second single from Frank Ocean's *Channel Orange* (8)
- 37 Enjoy a 2004 music documentary or a Miles Davis jazz standard (3)
- 40 John, the saxophonist responsible for *My Favorite Things* (8)
- 43 Indifferent response to Oasis track (8)
- 45 Proto-punk track from Neu! '75 (4)
- 48 Chuck Berry, back there in '59 (1.1.1.)
- 51 Al Jourgensen and Jello Biafra project (4)
- 54 Play his album (4)
- 55 The Incredible String Band track that opens *The Big Huge* (4)
- 57 At last, it's Miss James (4)
- 58 ----- *This Mutha Out* (Idris Muhammad, 1977) (4)

Getty (2), courtesy of Mute

Out of the Commercial Zone: The Adverts, 1976 (from left) Laurie Driver, Howard Pickup, TV Smith, Gaye Black; (below, right) the five-piece on the cover of '79's *Cast Of Thousands*; (bottom) Gaye today.



Gaye Black and The Adverts

From boredom-alleviation to The Roxy, it went off with a bang. Then came collapse in Slough.

HELLO 1976

I was doing graphic design at the South Devon College of Art Technology in Torquay, and I met Tim Smith. You could say it started there. Tim was very keen on David Bowie and we both liked Roxy Music and Cockney Rebel. He had a group called Sleaze. Well, I liked them!

When we finished college, Tim said, "Why don't you learn how to play the bass," you know, to alleviate the boredom. So we got a Gibson copy in a second-hand guitar shop in Exeter and started noodling around, doing his songs, as well as other things. There was nothing much going on in Devon and we had sort of half a set together by the time we moved to London in May '76.

We finally got hold of Howard [Pickup, guitar] in a rehearsal place he worked in called Cabin, not far from Hammer-smith, where we'd moved. We auditioned several drummers – when this enthusiastic guy called Jack came in, all of Led Zeppelin except the bass player were watching him, because they were rehearsing in the next room. He was so terrified we never saw him again. I remember Robert Plant jokingly saying to me, "Do you wanna join us?"

We eventually found [drummer Laurie Driver] when he was visiting Cabin. He hadn't played drums before, but he was up for it, so there we go. Then it became not just going to

gigs but, "We are going to do one." We were going to The Roxy as often as we could, and Tim said to Andy [Czezowski, promoter] "Can we play here?" [The Adverts made their live debut supporting Generation X on January 15, 1977]. The stage was only about a foot high – you wouldn't believe so many things happened in such a small place. I was always quite shy actually, so I probably dreaded it, but it felt quite homely.

It didn't seem particularly fast at the time, but when you're young time goes more slowly. On August 25, 1977, we were on Top Of The Pops [doing Gary Gilmore's Eyes]. It was my 21st birthday. I'm quite happy that I didn't feature that much, as I didn't stand where I was supposed to. I always hated having my picture taken.

GOODBYE OCTOBER 1979

It was just a general petering out. There was only me and Tim left of the original line-up – Howard disappeared one day, I think he

thought we'd get more and more famous, and when it flattened out a bit he was disappointed. Drummers had gone, Tim had got a keyboard player [Tim Cross] and there was a bit of animosity between him and [guitar-drums duo] the Martinez brothers, more friction than I realised at the time.

Also, the second LP [*Cast Of Thousands*] was not the sort of raw sound people had been used to. The guy at RCA that found us had left and I don't think they even knew who we were. They didn't put any effort into it.

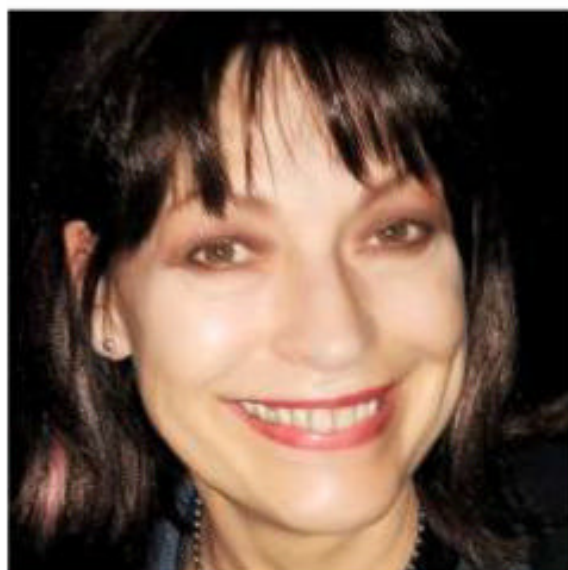
The last show [at Slough College on October 27, 1979] wasn't spectacularly bad, or good, it was... I don't know. I don't even remember if we knew it was our last gig. Afterwards I'd imagine we just got a lift home. I mean, [the group] were nice chaps, I got on fine with them, but I don't remember us saying, "Oh, this is it," and saying an emotional goodbye to anyone.

We couldn't hold the tensions together any longer. We didn't have enough money, Tim wanted to do something a bit more sophisticated, and I think I was just a bit burnt out and I needed a rest. I'd never really had that sort of urge to perform in front of people. The press didn't help either, [I'd been] getting picked on, so it was quite nice to slope off quietly. Also, I did used to take quite a lot of speed, so when that ran out, I ran out of momentum too. I didn't play anywhere public again.

[The Gaye Advert image and persona] is almost being kept alive. I feel a bit embarrassed about selling [art] that's got an image of me on, because I've always been a bit funny like that, but it's what people seem to want. I got dragged on-stage at the Undercover festival a couple of years ago, when Slaughter & The Dogs were headlining. Wayne Barrett grabbed hold of me and wanted me to sing a song. I just went, "Hello everybody, 'bye!" and ran off again (*laughs*).

As told to Ian Harrison

For info about Gaye's art go to gayeblack.co.uk



"Led Zeppelin were watching ...he was terrified."

GAYE ADVERT





THE
SOUND
MACHINE

DO YOU HAVE A VINYL RECORD COLLECTION TO SELL?

We are interested in viewing ALL quality collections of vinyl records and CDs ANYWHERE throughout the UK and Ireland. We'll travel to you.

Contact The Sound Machine if you would like to talk with one of our specialists or to arrange a viewing appointment.

Reading's Longest Established Independent Record Shop

Specialists in buying and selling new and second-hand vinyl records and CDs across all genres.

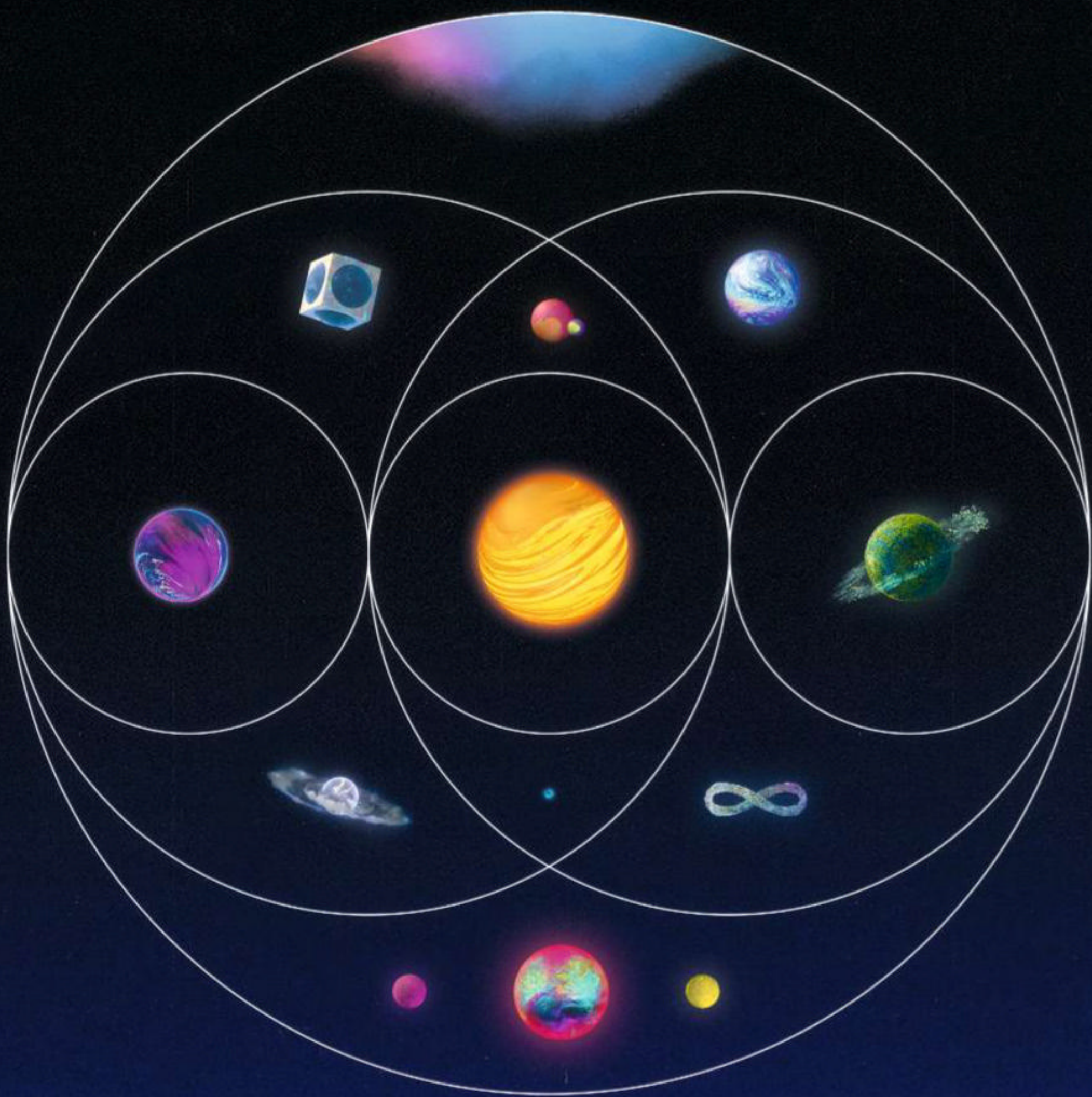
✉ info@thesoundmachine.uk.com
☎ 0118 957 5075 📞 07786 078 361



24 Harris Arcade, Reading,
Berkshire RG1 1DN

thesoundmachine.uk.com





COLDPLAY
MUSIC *of the* SPHERES

*Includes Higher Power, Coloratura
and My Universe with BTS*

OUT NOW

